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ABSTRACT

Established in April 1983, the San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC) was the nation's first youth corps program to be exclusively urban and nonresidential. Other unique aspects of the SFCC include its funding mix, emphasis on discipline and productivity, and diverse group of corpsmembers. The SFCC features physical work done in crews under close adult supervision. Corpsmembers work four days each week (for which they are paid \$3.35 per hour) and spend a fifth (unpaid) day attending mandatory education and youth development activities. The corps is administered with emphasis on punctuality, discipline, good work habits, cooperation, and physical fitness. Hard work is emphasized over the acquisition of particular skills. Program cohesiveness is attained by starting and ending each day at the corps' center. In 1985 the SFCC's crews accomplished about 100,000 hours of work for more than 75 organizations or sponsors throughout the city. Projects completed include park improvements, playground construction, and landscaping in public housing. Because of its purposeful recruiting of women, Asians, and Hispanics, the SFCC has been more successful than most corps in enrolling people from different cultural backgrounds. The program still has problems recruiting people with children, however, and the typical corpsmember is still male, single, and from a minority group. (MN)

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Youth Corps Case Studies:

The San Francisco Conservation Corps Interim Report

by Sheila Rosenblum
Sally Leiderman

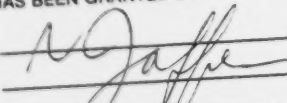
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Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) is a national, not-for-profit corporation that seeks effective approaches to job training and education for disadvantaged youth. P/PV designs and manages demonstration projects, conducts program evaluations, and provides technical assistance to others. Its work is supported by funds from both the public and private sectors.

A list of publications and further information about P/PV are available from: The Communications Department, Public/Private Ventures, 399 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106.
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Sheila Rosenblum and Sally Leiderman are the authors of this report, which was prepared under the supervision of Wendy Wolf, Director of Research at P/PV. They wish to thank numerous colleagues who contributed to its preparation. Natalie Jaffe, Judy White and Ari Eisinger edited the report. Nancy Peterson provided information on work projects and costs, and reviewed major sections of the report. Field interviews and observations were conducted by the authors and Martha Diepenbrock, Marc Freedman, Wendy Wolf and Jerene Good. Data analysis was performed by Jerene Good and Rick Etheredge. Charlotte White Thurmond and Paula Strawberry showed special patience in processing the material through to production.

Most of all the research team is indebted to the staff, corpsmembers and board members of the San Francisco Conservation Corps, who were very generous in answering questions, sharing files and allowing P/PV to "look over their shoulders" as they conducted the daily operations of the program. We are grateful for their participation in the development of this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth conservation corps traditionally evoke an image of jobless youth fighting forest fires in remote areas. Recently, however, the idea of using city youth to build and restore their own communities has generated wide interest among policy makers and program planners. The San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC) was the first such corps -- exclusively urban and non-residential. It was established in April 1983 for the dual purposes of improving the physical environment of San Francisco and providing a corps experience to a diverse group of city youth while they live at home.

Because it is the first exclusively urban and non-residential corps -- and because of some of its other special features, including its funding mix, emphasis on discipline and productivity, and diverse group of corpsmembers -- the SFCC was included in Public/Private Ventures' national assessment of youth conservation and service corps.

P/PV's first of two reports on the SFCC describes the history, goals, operations and characteristics of the corps as it moved from initiation to a more mature stage of operations. It also includes some interim conclusions on the extent to which the SFCC is achieving its goals and what lessons other corps might learn from the initial SFCC experience. An update will be completed in July 1987.

The report is based on site observations and interviews conducted in February, April, July and November 1985. It also draws from the SFCC's management information system that P/PV helped to install, and from information contained in SFCC funding proposals, reports to funders, reports to the board and general memoranda.

THE PROGRAM

The SFCC was initiated in April 1983 through a special committee of the Private Industry Council, which ran a pilot program in the summer of 1983. Since May 1984, the SFCC has been administered as a private, non-profit corporation governed by a 12-member board appointed by the mayor, and directed and managed by an executive director and a staff of 13.

The year-round non-residential program employs and trains out-of-school youth between the ages of 18 and 23. At any one time in 1985, 65 to 85 corpsmembers were working in seven crews on projects intended to improve public space and facilities throughout San Francisco. New corpsmembers come into the program every three or four weeks to replace those who leave. As of November 1985, the year-round SFCC had employed about 560 youth who had worked from one day to one full year.

The SFCC also includes an eight-week summer program for youth between the ages of 16 and 21. During the summer of 1985, about 60 youth participated. Corpsmembers are hired at the beginning of the summer, and one replacement hiring is done two weeks after the program begins.

The corps' goals are both community and youth oriented. It aims to develop a disciplined force to provide needed work on public lands and facilities in San Francisco, and to improve corpsmembers' work habits, literacy and leadership abilities. Both goals are pursued through structured work opportunities along with formal and informal training and educational programs. The primary emphasis is on work.

More than half the SFCC's funds come through contracts with the city, including Community Development Block Grant "public space funds" administered by the Mayor's Office of Community Development; the federal government (National Park Service through the Golden Gate National Recreational Area) and the private sector. Other funds come from the state through the California Conservation Corps, from foundation and corporate funds. Total funding in 1985 was \$1.5 million for both the year-round and summer programs. Cost-per-slot for year-round corpsmembers was \$13,869; for summer corpsmembers, \$2,535.

THE CORPS IN ACTION

The SFCC follows closely the model of the California Conservation Corps (CCC), adapting it to a non-residential and urban setting. The model features physical work, done in crews under close adult supervision, with an emphasis on productivity and strict discipline.

Corpsmembers work four days a week and spend the fifth day in education or other youth development activities. They are paid \$3.35 an hour for the four work days. The fifth day's activities are mandatory, but unpaid. Corpsmembers can stay in the program for up to one year. If they are promoted to crew leader or specialist, they may stay up to two years.

Corpsmembers come from neighborhoods all over the city to begin each day at Fort Mason, the SFCC headquarters, in sight of the Golden Gate Bridge, the hills of Marin, the San Francisco skyline and the marina district. After a brisk physical workout and a one-mile run, crews and staff board vans and report to worksites throughout the city. Sometimes corpsmembers work in their own neighborhoods, but many travel long distances to begin and end each day at Fort Mason.

The corps is administered with emphasis on punctuality, discipline, good work habits, cooperation and physical fitness. Youth are recruited for a "job" for which they are "hired" and paid the minimum wage. Expectations and regulations are clearly presented and strictly enforced: either arriving late during the first

week, using alcohol or drugs, or fighting or stealing at any time results in immediate firing; three unexcused absences from work or the unpaid education day result in dismissal; corpsmembers arriving late without prior notification are not allowed to work that day; corpsmembers are expected to be disciplined workers who respond to supervision, write daily in their journals, register to vote, and participate in blood drives and other community activities.

The SFCC emphasizes hard work over acquisition of particular skills. Most projects require few specific occupational skills beyond the ability to work hard, follow directions and adhere to safety standards. However, some projects undertaken for public housing projects, the parks department and community-based organizations are more substantial and have required such varied skills as painting, hanging sheetrock and electrical/plumbing work.

Work projects are carried out by nine- to 12-member crews with an SFCC work supervisor and a crew leader, a corpsmember promoted into a leadership position. The work supervisor is involved in project planning and crew assignments and provides initial instruction and oversight on the job. As the job progresses, the crew leader provides direct supervision while the supervisor plans the next job.

The SFCC's second major focus -- on youth development -- is expressed primarily through work, but also includes an education component and informal teaching activities. The day set aside for education includes some formal classes in traditional academic subjects (reading and math) and English as a Second Language, and in such non-academic subjects as tool maintenance, management and budgeting. Career development/pre-employment skills are also taught occasionally, but without a formalized curriculum. Plans are underway to add a formal component in this area to the curriculum and to provide classes in plumbing, carpentry and power tool use. Informal educational activities include reading and writing in personal journals, sharing views and information in SFCC meetings, and athletic events and group outings.

Corpsmembers represent the racially and ethnically diverse population of San Francisco: blacks, whites, Hispanics and Asians. One-third of the enrollees are women. Although the program is not specifically targeted to disadvantaged youth, most corpsmembers are from low and low-to-moderate income families, half have not graduated from high school, and most are deficient in basic skills. The corps attracts mostly single people, people without children, and youth who are not the primary wage earners in their families. While corpsmembers may remain up to one year, the average length of stay in the corps is less than 90 days. Most corpsmembers who leave in the first months are fired; those who stay longer tend to leave voluntarily.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

In its first two years of operation, the SFCC has demonstrated that the conservation corps model exemplified by the primarily rural, residential CCC can be successfully adapted to a non-residential program in an urban setting:

- Within the city, the SFCC has identified many physical community improvement projects to perform, including park improvements, playground construction, landscaping in public housing areas or for community organizations, interior renovation and remodeling, and assistance at public events.
- Even though they must commute each day, non-residential corpsmembers are fully engaged for long days, start work very early in the morning and attend evening educational sessions, do community work on weekends and so on. However, as is the case with residential programs, it is difficult to attract women with children, or others with family responsibilities.
- Although a non-residential program, the SFCC fosters cohesiveness through highly centralized administration and the fact that each day begins and ends with activity at the corps' center.

Other findings and lessons include:

- The SFCC is characterized by industriousness, corps spirit, discipline and an emphasis on productivity and work as an anchor for both service and youth development.
- The corps had a strong start-up and appears to have moved toward maturity as an institution: its operations are stable and routinized, its one million dollar contract with the city for 1986 was approved unanimously, many work sponsors call the SFCC to request work crews, and potential corpsmembers call to obtain information about joining the corps.
- Its status as an independent non-profit agency has enabled the corps, unlike a government department or agency, to obtain a mix of funding and to develop a broad political constituency. These make possible flexibility in program design and suggest the likelihood of long-term financial security.

The corps' experience with utilizing different types of funding sources has shown that it can be done -- but at a price. The need to account to many different funders creates an administrative burden greater than reporting to only one or two funders, particularly if only some contracts are performance based. In addition, the need to estimate project requirements in advance and to plan for and order materials for some funders requires a substantial amount of staff time. Other corps that attempt to diversify funding and take on more contract reimbursement work have to consider these implications for program administration and budgeting.

- In most cases, the staff is strong and highly experienced, and there has been very little turnover. The program's centralized structure enables staff to remain in daily contact with administration, each other and corpsmembers, reinforcing the ethos and standards of the corps.
- Crews are well supervised, work productively and produce good quality physical work. According to the SFCC, crews accomplished about 100,000 hours of work in 1985 for more than 75 organizations or sponsors throughout the city. Experiments with human service work are planned for the future.

Project sponsors are generally enthusiastic and recommend the corps to other sponsors. However, some sponsors interviewed by the research team felt the corps was not as efficient as they had hoped, or were disappointed that corpsmembers were trainees, not skilled workers. In a sense, the corps is a victim of its own reputation; some work sponsors seemed unrealistic in their expectations.

- The youth development components have been unevenly implemented. The informal aspects appear to be successful and resemble an alternative school model. The more formal aspects, however, are less well developed and have been slow to evolve. The portion of the week set aside for formal education is not well planned. Though about half the SFCC participants are high school dropouts, only two have completed their GEDs through channels provided by the corps.
- The SFCC has been more successful than most corps in enrolling people from different cultural backgrounds -- a result of purposive recruitment of women, Asians and Hispanics. Still, however,

the typical corpsmember is male, single and from a minority group.

- Strict enforcement of rules -- more consistently than in other corps P/PV has observed -- has led to a high rate of turnover; the average length of stay is less than three months. There is constant movement in and out of the program as "newbies" enter and voluntary and non-voluntary terminations occur. Most non-voluntary terminations are for infringement of the rules.
- Many youth do not survive the first weeks, when the corps' expectations for behavior are established and enforced. SFCC staff have commented that some youth who left early might have benefited from participation in the corps if they had been allowed more flexibility and time to adjust. Among those who stay, the research team observed strong interpersonal support and gains in pride in work, good work habits and new skills.
- High turnover has serious implications for the SFCC. The work plan for 1985 was based on an average daily crew size of nine. As of July, the SFCC had fallen short of that expectation; the average was seven-and-a-half. As a result, plans for completion of projects were behind schedule. Although strict rules are necessary to facilitate learning and high productivity, enforcement has created a rate of turnover that has strained the staff, caused difficulty in meeting production and funding goals, and interfered with the corps' ability to deliver formal educational programs.

I. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Service, friendship, competence, character -- these words are the slogan of the San Francisco Conservation Corps (SFCC), the first exclusively urban, locally run youth conservation corps. Initiated in April 1983, the SFCC has been operating a year-round program as an independent non-profit corporation for almost two years. While the slogan represents many features of the corps and its operations, the SFCC is particularly characterized by industriousness, esprit, discipline and, most of all, an emphasis on productivity and work as an anchor for both service and youth development.

The concept of an urban, non-residential youth conservation corps has evoked wide interest among policy makers and program planners. For this reason -- and because of some special features of the SFCC, such as its funding mix, successful start-up and discipline and productivity -- the SFCC has been included in P/PV's study on youth conservation and service corps.

This is the first of two reports on the SFCC. It describes and assesses the goals, start-up, key features and operations of the corps. The purpose is to extract lessons learned from the early San Francisco experience, so that SFCC and other program planners and policy makers may benefit.

The report is based on site observations and interviews conducted in April, July and November of 1985. It also draws heavily from the SFCC's management information system and from documents prepared by the SFCC -- funding proposals, reports to funders, reports to its board of directors and general memoranda. A future report will more extensively assess the educational and work components and describe and analyze in greater depth the program and attrition experience of participants.

This chapter presents an overview of the program, summarizing its goals, design and unique or key features. In subsequent chapters, these will be discussed in greater detail.

OVERVIEW

The SFCC was initiated in April 1983 through a special committee of the Private Industry Council, which ran a pilot program in the summer of 1983. Since May 1984, the SFCC has been administered as a private non-profit corporation and operates as a year-round non-residential program, employing and training out-of-school youth between the ages of 18 and 23 for up to one year.

Corpsmembers work four days a week and spend the fifth day in formal and informal youth development activities. They are paid

\$3.35 an hour for the four work days. The fifth day is mandatory, but unpaid. There is constant movement in and out of the program, with groups of new corpsmembers beginning every three or four weeks and a steady stream of voluntary and non-voluntary terminations. In 1985, the number of corpsmembers serving in the year-round corps at any one time was between 65 and 85, working in seven crews on projects intended to improve public space and facilities throughout San Francisco.

The SFCC also includes an eight-week summer program for youth between the ages of 16 and 21. During the summer of 1985, about 60 youth participated. Corpsmembers are hired at the beginning of the summer, and one replacement hiring is done two weeks after the program begins.

The SFCC follows closely the model of the California Conservation Corps (CCC), adapting it to a non-residential and urban setting. The main features of the model are physical work, done in crews under close adult supervision, with an emphasis on productivity and strict discipline. The research team noted that strictness and a strong sense of discipline are coupled with a caring, supportive environment. This combination is probably facilitated by the fact that the program is centrally located and directed, and is small enough to be relatively personal. There is a common core and ethos to the program. The program is also strengthened by staff members with complementary skills and experience in youth and/or conservation work.

Goals of the Program

The SFCC goals are both community and youth oriented. The corps aims to develop a disciplined force to provide needed work on public lands and facilities in San Francisco. At the same time, it seeks to prepare corpsmembers for the future and help them become employable, productive members of society. Both goals are accomplished by providing structured work opportunities along with relevant training and educational programs. The two goals, productive work and youth development, have been articulated differently in various program documents, but they pervade all SFCC activities. Less emphasized in written documents is the placement of corpsmembers in jobs after their service in the SFCC. However, there is such activity, and job placement does occur with increasing frequency.

Organization and Funding

The SFCC operates as a private non-profit corporation, governed by a twelve-member Board of Directors appointed by Mayor Diane Feinstein. Board members represent business, labor, civic, education and land management agencies. The program is directed and managed by an executive director and staff of 13, including a coordinator who develops and oversees the work projects; a coor-

dinator of recruitment, community relations and job placement; an education coordinator; an administrative officer; and seven crew supervisors. The executive director, Robert Burkhardt, and the project coordinator, John Oubre, are both veterans of the CCC, as are two of the work supervisors. The first project director, Nancy Peterson, who served during the planning phase, serves as a project consultant and provides assistance in administration, funds acquisition and strategic planning.

The SFCC is funded by a combination of Federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) administered by the City of San Francisco through the Mayor's Office of Community Development (MOCD), state funds (administered through the CCC), federal funds (Golden Gate National Recreational Area), foundation or corporate funds, and private contracts.

Corpsmembers

Corpsmembers represent the racially and ethnically diverse population of San Francisco. Although the program is not specifically targeted to disadvantaged youth, most corpsmembers are from low and low-to-moderate income families. Some are single parents, some live on their own, some live with family members. Many are high school dropouts, most are deficient in basic skills; some speak little or no English.

Year-round corpsmembers can stay in the program for up to one year. If they are promoted to crew leader or specialist, they may stay up to two years. But the average length of stay is less than six months. The program is very strict and disciplined, and a number of youth leave the program within the first month because they are unable to maintain the required program standards. The characteristics and experiences of corpsmembers are detailed in Chapter IV of this report.

Program Components

The primary components of the program are work and education. Within this context, there is great emphasis on punctuality, discipline, good work habits, cooperation and physical fitness. The primary emphasis is on work. Although the SFCC is considered a program, youth are recruited to a "job" for which they are "hired" and paid a minimum wage of \$3.35 an hour for four work-days a week. A condition of hiring is participation in a mandatory unpaid education day.

The program is based at Fort Mason, which is under the jurisdiction of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), an area of the National Parks Service. Corpsmembers come from neighborhoods all over the city to begin their day in a picture post card setting: views of Golden Gate Bridge, the hills of

Marin, the San Francisco skyline and the marina district surround Fort Mason.

After a brisk physical workout and a one-mile run (all corpsmembers and staff participate), crews board vans and report to worksites throughout the city. Sometimes corpsmembers work in their neighborhoods, but many travel long distances because the program begins and ends each day at Fort Mason.

Opening and closing each day at the center has educational and symbolic value; it helps to unify the crews, both in the body and spirit of a corps, and it reinforces the individual corpsmember's identification with the SFCC.

This identification is strengthened by corpsmembers looking the part: crew members and supervisors at both Fort Mason and the worksites wear uniforms -- tan chinos, blue workshirts, SFCC badges, boots and hats.

As of November 15, 1985, the SFCC employed approximately 560 youth who worked from one day to one full year. According to the SFCC, in 1985 they accomplished over 100,000 hours of work for more than 75 organizations or work sponsors throughout the city. These projects included landscaping, trail development, playground construction, building repair and cleanup.

The education and youth development program emphasizes health and occupational safety, personal growth, multi-cultural awareness and sensitivity, citizenship, conservation, and pre-employment skills and career awareness. It also offers formal classes in basic skills and literacy, with opportunities to complete high school by getting a GED, and to learn English as a second language.

The unpaid education day has changed in format since the program began. At first, the formal education program took place one day every week, on Fridays. Some classes were held at the center in Fort Mason, and some at a local community college. Beginning with the fall of 1985, all classes were held at the center, some during the evening after the work day, and some on Friday.

The SFCC is a no-nonsense, disciplined work program. Expectations and rules are clearly presented and strictly enforced:

- using alcohol or drugs, fights or stealing are not tolerated and result in immediate firing;
- only three unexcused absences allowed;
- Corpsmembers arriving late without calling in first are sent home and not allowed to work that day; corpsmembers arriving late at all during the first week are fired;

- unpaid education day attendance is required;
- corpsmembers are expected to be disciplined workers who respond to supervision;
- corpsmembers are expected to write in journals every day, register to vote, and participate in blood drives and other community activities.

Many youth do not survive the first weeks, when these expectations for their behavior are established and enforced. For those who stay, however, the authors of this report observed strong support, a sense of the corps as "family," and gains in pride in work, good work habits and new skills.

The remainder of this report describes the SFCC and the ways in which the context and features of the program appear to be affecting the corps' achievements and outcomes. The report is organized as follows:

- Chapter II describes the origins and start-up of the program, including some design decisions and how they came about.
- Chapter III presents the organization, staffing and structure of the program.
- Chapter IV focuses on the corpsmembers, how they are recruited, who they are and what they do.
- Chapter V presents the work component of the program, the nature and scope of the work projects, and how projects are developed and supervised.
- Chapter VI presents the youth development components, including the formal and informal education offered by the program.
- Chapter VII describes funding sources and costs.
- Chapter VIII presents a summary and analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the SFCC, and the lessons learned from the San Francisco experience.

II. ORIGINS, HISTORY AND START-UP OF THE PROGRAM

This chapter focuses on the SFCC's origins and its early history, including the summer pilot program and its outcomes. It also describes some early decisions made for the design of the permanent corps, and how they came about.

ORIGINS OF THE PROGRAM

Several conditions led to the establishment of the San Francisco Conservation Corps and helped bring it to the relatively mature state and smooth functioning that it now enjoys. These include:

- the presence and perceived success of the California Conservation Corps;
- the presence of a local conservation corps in the neighboring county of Marin;
- the San Francisco tradition of concern about the environment and development of its public lands;
- the California tradition of involvement in YACC, youth development programs and conservation oriented programs;
- the emergence of a "champion" for the corps, Justice Anthony Kline, and his ability to attract the interest of the mayor, other influential leaders, and a number of public and quasi-public agencies such as the PIC;
- the presence in the Bay Area of several foundations with a tradition of support for innovative youth development programs in the local area.

There is wide agreement among those knowledgeable about the SFCC that Justice Anthony Kline, a California Appeals Court justice, was a key mover in the initiation of the SFCC. His experience with the juvenile justice system convinced him that unemployment was a major factor in disruptive behavior among youth. He was also convinced that many current job training and job placement programs for inner city youth were not sufficiently effective to overcome the insufficiencies of academic background, job skills, family support and knowledge of appropriate work behavior that he believed characterized disadvantaged youth. He learned that employers would simply not hire youth unless they demonstrated work-ready behavior, a sense of discipline and personal responsibility.

Justice Kline had been impressed with the success of the CCC as a program that socialized youth to good work habits through physical labor and, at the same time, provided service to the general community. He was also stimulated by the Marin Conservation Corps to consider the advantages of bringing the program to the municipal level, adapting it to local needs and using community resources. He saw the potential of a local corps in San Francisco to meet several of San Francisco's needs: the need for jobs and training for inner city youth, and the opportunity for youth to serve the community.

Justice Kline spoke to Mayor Diane Feinstein about the idea. She appointed Kline to the board of the Private Industry Council (PIC) where he spearheaded a special committee to plan a local conservation corps. Additional steering committee members were Robert Alioto (then San Francisco superintendent of schools), Yori Wada (then chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of California), and Leandro Soto (prominent community leader). The experiences and contacts of these individuals made major contributions to the start-up of the corps. With the exception of Alioto, who is no longer superintendent, they all continue to be active board members of the SFCC, with Kline as board chairman.

Kline took formal leadership of the program within the context of the PIC and was able to muster key support. Through Kline and his committee efforts, funds were sought for a feasibility and planning demonstration for a San Francisco Conservation Corps. Alan Weisberg, a consultant, was asked to assist in the design and planning of the program. Nancy Peterson was hired by the PIC to be the director, and to design and manage a summer demonstration program. She was chosen because of her experience with conservation programs, and because of her planning expertise. As a result of the efforts of the PIC, the committee, Weisberg and Peterson, the PIC was awarded planning and demonstration program grants totaling \$75,000 from three foundations, two corporations, the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) and the State Department of Forestry.

START-UP: THE SUMMER PILOT

The program began as a summer pilot in June 1983 with 24 corpsmembers organized in three work crews. Nancy Peterson served as director during this period. She hired Elizabeth Halas, currently the education coordinator of the SFCC, to work with her.

The start-up of the summer demonstration was facilitated through linkages that were established with other organizations and agencies. Because of her connections with the GGNRA, Nancy Peterson was able to secure a location at Fort Mason (part of the GGNRA)

as home base for the summer demonstration. It became the permanent headquarters of the SFCC. Work projects for the first summer were sponsored by the Recreation and Parks Department, GGNRA and the San Francisco Unified School District.

Because of the brief time available to get the summer pilot started, SFCC staff relied heavily on other organizations to select staff and recruit corpsmembers. Two work supervisors were loaned to the summer pilot by the CCC. These work supervisors were second-year corpsmembers who had been promoted to crew leaders. A third supervisor was hired through the PIC.

Most corpsmembers were and paid through the city's Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). These youth were largely high school age, and had to meet the low-income criteria of eligibility established by the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA). Additional youth were recruited and paid through private sector funds.

The summer program was based on a quick start-up, largely as an expediency, according to Peterson, to give the program an identity, establish its presence in the city and give it a home base. Several lessons were learned from the experience. First, funding could be pieced together from several public and private sources. Second, experienced and mature supervisors were necessary. The program appreciated the loan of CCC crew leaders, (participant leaders/crew supervisors-in-training) but felt that they would not be experienced or mature enough to take full responsibility for crews in the year-round corps, when corpsmembers would be not high school age, but 18-23. Third, they learned the importance of being directly involved in the recruitment and hiring of corpsmembers. Many participants who had been sent by SYEP had not been aware of the philosophy and expectations of the SFCC.

Once the summer pilot was over, SFCC contracted to a single work crew. This decision was made for two reasons: staff wanted to continue operation at some level to sustain its presence. They felt that this would aid in seeking funding. However, staff also wanted time to refine the model before full-scale, year-round operation of the corps would begin. As a compromise, one crew was hired and put to work renovating the base at Fort Mason.

Funding for year-round operation of a permanent corps was secured with the mayor's support. A \$580,000 Community Development Block Grant from the Emergency Jobs Bill was awarded to the PIC by the Mayor's Office of Community Development (MOCD).

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A YEAR-ROUND SFCC

Two major decisions influenced the overall form that the year-round SFCC would take. The first was the decision to establish

SFCC as an independent, private, non-profit corporation. The second was the decision to appoint Robert Burkhardt, who had been deputy director of the California Conservation Corps, as executive director. The following sections describe these decisions and several others relating to the corps' goals, composition, size and structure.

Creating a Non-profit Corporation

The summer pilot demonstration was run under the auspices of the PIC and funded by several public and private agencies. When it became clear that the concept of a municipal corps was viable, it became necessary to decide on an appropriate administrative entity for the corps since it was not considered to be a permanent program of the PIC.

According to Justice Kline, the mayor preferred the corps to be administered as a city agency. But the Steering Committee and its advisors saw greater advantages for a corps constituted as an independent non-profit organization, freed from the constraints of the civil service system. Independent status would also give the program greater control over its own growth and development, in particular permitting a much more flexible and heterogeneous funding arrangement than possible under other circumstances.

In December 1983, bylaws and articles of incorporation were filed with the State of California to organize the SFCC as an independent non-profit corporation. However, special linkages with the municipality were maintained. The mayor was empowered to appoint a 12-member board of directors. The commitment of funds from the Mayor's Office of Community Development also ensured that the corps would focus many of its projects on improvements to the city's public spaces. At the same time, independent status would allow the corps to seek additional funding and work projects from state and foundation sources, and ultimately from private contracts, without the restraints placed on government agencies. The change to non-profit status from program administration by the PIC was not a simple one. It required many hours of negotiation, administrative paperwork, and renegotiation of contracts that had been formerly awarded to the PIC. In May 1984, the SFCC began operating as an independent non-profit corporation, and as the country's first independent municipal conservation corps.

Appointment of a Director

The appointment of Robert Burkhardt as director also had a major influence on the form the SFCC would take. Burkhardt's strong emphasis on discipline, productivity and hard work as an anchor of youth development and his focus on social consciousness made a major imprint on the style and functioning of the program. He brought with him some key staff from the CCC, including John

Oubre, project coordinator, and two crew supervisors. The first director, Nancy Peterson, was asked to continue as a consultant on contract to the corps. Her administrative and planning skills strongly complemented the skills of Burkhardt and Oubre.

Design Decisions

The newly constituted staff, with the assistance of a steering committee of the board of directors, embarked on a mission to start up and secure a permanent year-round SFCC. Several decisions were made that influenced the corps' specific character. These included the articulation of programs goals and determination of the corps' composition, size and structure. These decisions and their implications are now described.

Program Goals

The SFCC's goals evolved both explicitly and implicitly and are reflected both in written documents and in the emphases that program leaders promote. Programmatic goals have been presented in different ways in different documents, but always identify two global goals:

- high quality, productive work for San Francisco; and
- youth leadership, including employability development, relevant training and education for youth.

Although not clearly prioritized, these goals have not changed and remain strong. However, the research team noted that the youth development goal has not been clearly articulated for areas other than work. In particular, articulation of the educational goals has been slow in evolving.

Composition, Size and Structure. Planning for the year-round program resulted in a number of decisions about composition, size and structure that were modeled in part on other California corps and the planning suggestions of Alan Weisberg. These decisions included the following:

- 1) Enrollment would not be limited to specific target populations based on economic eligibility criteria. During the summer pilot demonstration, recruitment primarily targeted disadvantaged youth eligible for SYEP. (JTPA funds can only be used to employ and train disadvantaged youth.) During the summer of 1983, about two-thirds of the youth were recruited through SYEP. The rest were supported by private funds. The permanent corps was always intended to recruit widely to attract a group representing the ethnic diversity of San Francisco though the underlying target was disadvantaged and unemployed youth.

It was felt, particularly by Burkhardt, that the needs of these youth would best be served by having a diverse population in the program.

- 2) The age range for corpsmembers would be 18-23. The SFCC would not be an alternative to high school; however, high school dropouts of 18 or over would be eligible.
- 3) To emphasize the importance of education, the week would be divided into four days of work and one day of education. It was decided to pay corpsmembers a wage for time worked but not for time in mandatory education.
- 4) Other educational agencies would be used to provide educational services.

The original plan kept open the option of a residential program, but this was tabled by logistical and cost constraints. The decision to have a non-residential program was later rationalized as more appropriate for an urban corps and more conducive to fostering the assumption of responsibility by the youth enrolled.

A continuing design issue on which there was and is divided opinion is program size. The chairman of the board and other board members would like the program to grow. (One document called for growth to 500; earlier documents mentioned 1000.) The director prefers to limit the corps to 70-80, or at most, 100. Currently the average size is 75, and there is agreement on the advisability of growing incrementally by gradually phasing in additional crews. In March 1984 there were three crews; by the end of the summer, five crews; and by January 1985, seven.

Major events in the start-up and history of the SFCC are summarized in the chronology (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

Chronology of Project Start-up

March 1983:	Planning process begins through the PIC, with Kline as initiator and champion;
April/May 1983:	Nancy Peterson hired as director of the pilot program;
June 1983:	PIC initiates summer SFCC demo with 24 youth;
Fall 1983:	Approval of 580K CDBG funds for SFCC;
Dec. 1983:	Application filed for incorporation of the SFCC as private non-profit organization;
Jan. 1984:	Burkhardt is hired;
Feb. 1984:	Board hands over administration of program to Burkhardt;
March 1984:	Formal opening of the SFCC; expansion to three crews;
June 1984:	Expansion to five crews; begin summer program with five crews;
Sept. 1984:	Passage of SB 2049 authorizing the use of state funds for local corps; expansion to six crews; and
Jan. 1985:	Receipt of first SB 2049 funds; expansion to seven crews.

III. PROGRAM ORGANIZATION, STAFF AND STRUCTURE

This chapter presents the way in which the SFCC is organized, operated and managed. We first briefly describe the administrative structure, the board configuration and roles, and the staff configuration and roles. We then follow with an expanded discussion of staff and their characteristics, the dynamics of leadership and interplay of staff that make the program "work," as well as linkages with other agencies in managing the corps. The chapter concludes with a brief description of the summer program and how it differs from the year-round SFCC.

PROGRAM ORGANIZATION

The San Francisco Conservation Corps operates as a private non-profit corporation (501(c)(3)) governed by a board of directors. Although a private organization, it has strong linkages to the city government -- a major source of funding and work projects -- through the Mayor's Office of Community Development and other city agencies. Further indication of the strong linkage is the fact that the members of the board are appointed by the mayor, and include representatives of business, labor, civic, education and land management agencies. These representatives constitute a board that is able to prevent conflicts that would hinder the corps from achieving its goals. For example, board members facilitated negotiations with union representatives to avoid potential problems with SFCC work projects.

The board meets three or four times a year and functions in an advisory capacity. An executive committee of the board consisting of Chairman Kline, Soto and Wada, meets more frequently with the executive director. Justice Kline, in particular, continues actively in constituency-building and fundraising. But the overall management of the program and the establishment of significant policies are left to the executive director and his staff.

PROGRAM STAFF

The SFCC operates as both a year-round and a summer program. The summer program is run as a separate and independent operation and is described more fully below. The year-round SFCC is staffed as follows:

- An executive director, Robert Burkhardt, guides and leads the program.

- A project coordinator, John Oubre, develops, plans and oversees the work projects, and oversees the crew supervisors.
- An administrative officer, Martha Helms, manages the fiscal operations of the program, the Management Information System and the office.
- An education coordinator, Elizabeth Halas, (formerly a supervisor in the YACC), organizes and oversees the educational activities of the mandated education day.
- A coordinator of recruitment/community relations/job placements, Richard Woo, conducts those activities, as well as interviewing and orienting new corpsmembers and conducting career development activities.
- An assistant project coordinator plans for materials and equipment, orders materials and advises crew supervisors on work project implementation. Kris Justesen was project coordinator through 1985. Kathy Royer has since replaced her in that job.
- An office manager, Lidia Roldan, and part-time bookkeeper were added in the winter of 1986 to assist the administrative officer and staff.
- Seven crew supervisors plan work projects, guide, teach and supervise corpsmembers in the work projects, and teach some courses in the mandated education day. Each crew supervisor works with a crew of between nine and 12 corpsmembers. This number varies depending on enrollment in the corps.
- A project consultant, Nancy Peterson, assists in funds acquisition, proposal development, strategic planning and other special projects.
- A financial consultant has assisted with accounting since the SFCC became a non-profit corporation.
- Three corpsmember specialists (this number may vary) are employed as a clerical assistant, a tool room assistant and an education assistant.
- Varying numbers of crew leaders (corpsmembers who have been promoted) assist crew supervisors in supervising work projects.

- Corpsmembers themselves are not staff but are "hired" by the SFCC to work on crews (and to perform other training tasks); their number varies from 65-85 depending on the time of the month and rolling hires and fires.

An organization chart depicting staff roles and relationships is attached (See Figure 2).

Program Leadership and Dynamics

The SFCC is a highly centralized program with a strong director whose philosophy of education and training emphasizes structure and discipline. He frequently uses a "sergeant-like" style in dealing with youth, but he also emphasizes personal growth, the importance of communication skills, social concerns and civic responsibilities. While asserting his own special leadership and vision of what a corps is, he allows his staff much autonomy. He describes his style and philosophy for staff and youth development in terms of empowerment: "Empowerment of staff leads to empowerment of kids."

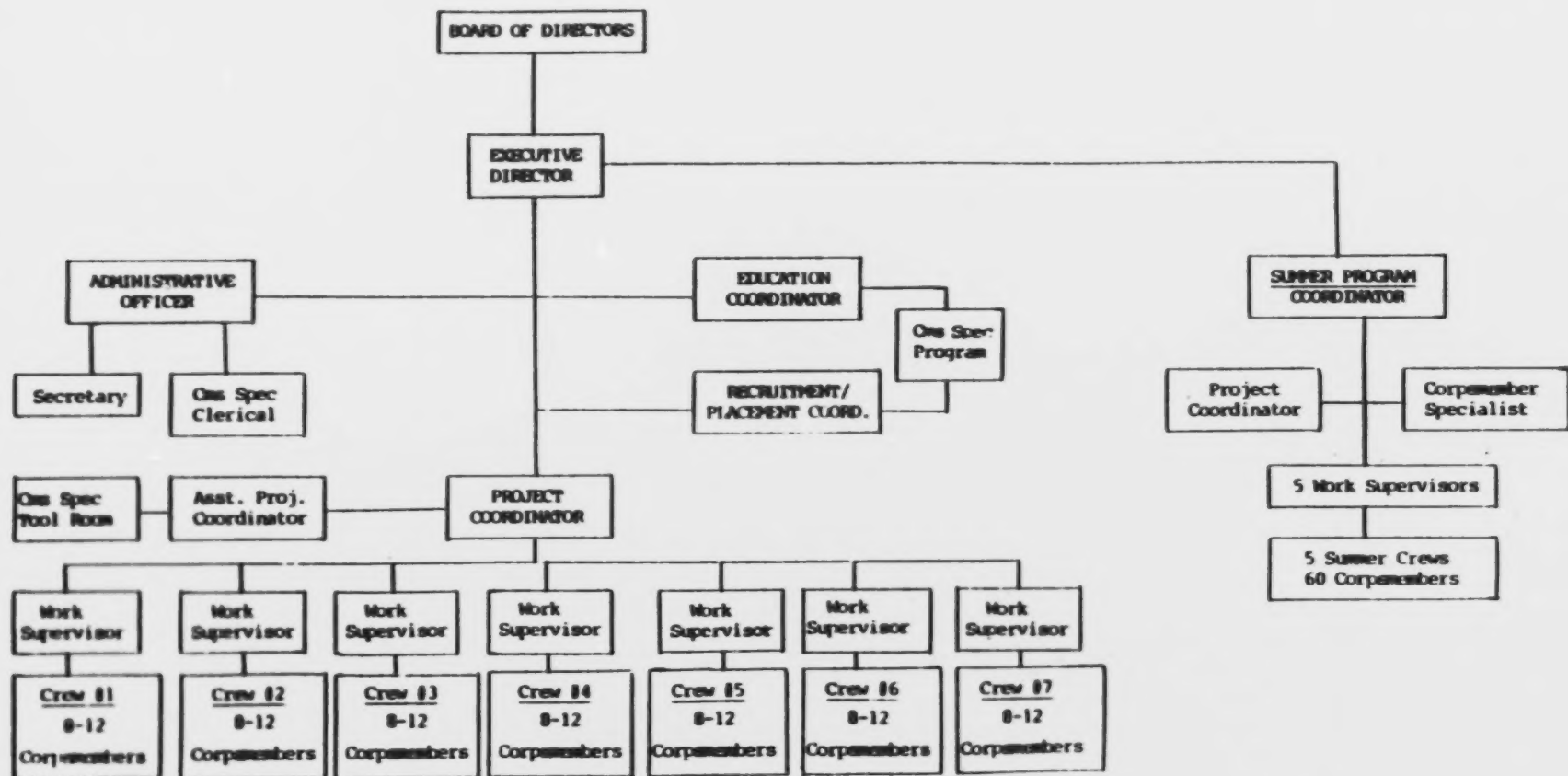
In part, he is able to do this because the professional staff of the SFCC represents a vast number of years of cumulative experience with the CCC or other youth conservation and service programs. The training of staff, particularly crew supervisors, is informal. New supervisors learn by "shadowing" experienced staff for a certain amount of time before moving out on their own. Staff meetings are held weekly to discuss issues as they arise. But because of the centralization of the program, the common ethos and mission of the program is constantly reinforced by the core staff.

The staff has remained quite stable since the beginning of the project, though additions have been made due to incremental growth. The director and project coordinator have been on board since the beginning of 1984. The education coordinator has been with the program since the summer pilot demonstration.

The crew supervisor staff, a position subject to burnout in many youth corps, has remained fairly stable as well, although some turnover has occurred. Since January 1984, a total of 11 individuals have served in the crew supervisor role. During the first year of the year-round program, one left voluntarily for personal reasons, and one was fired (along with a crew) for violation of corps rules against disruptive behavior. One crew supervisor left recently to become director of a satellite center of the CCC. There is a strong likelihood that several others will go on to leadership positions in other conservation corps. In many ways, the SFCC serves as a staff development as well as youth development program.

Figure 2

San Francisco Conservation Corps
Organizational Chart



There are many demands on the crew supervisor in the SFCC. Crew supervisors are responsible for the behavior and productivity of the corpsmembers at the worksites and are increasingly involved in the planning of work projects for their crews. They also have administrative responsibilities, such as taking attendance and making out timesheets. In addition, they are called upon to teach special classes in the education program and to participate in special activities, such as trips. It is for this reason that the job is often considered a "burnout" position. However, an explanation for relatively low supervisor turnover in the SFCC lies in the autonomy they enjoy, their "empowerment" and opportunities for personal growth and development.

Linkages With Other Organizations

All program functions (e.g., recruitment, project development, work supervision, education, job placement) are carried out or supervised within the organization itself. But the SFCC does link with other organizations to assist in these functions. For example, the SFCC approaches schools, community organizations and the state employment service for recruitment of corpsmembers. SFCC staff coordinate with work sponsors -- often public agencies and CBOs -- to design the scope of work and exercise quality control over the work itself. As for the formal education program, the SFCC utilized Project Independence High School and the John Adams Community College to deliver educational services in 1984 and 1985. But these educational arrangements did not always prove satisfactory, and SFCC staff now prefer to exercise more control over the educational component by choosing teachers and providing classes at SFCC headquarters.

In addition to the special relationship with the city, linkages continue with other organizations. For example, the SFCC continues a strong relationship with the GGNRA, provider of space at Fort Mason and work sponsor for the summer and year-round corps. Linkages continue as part of project development with city agencies, such as Recreation and Parks, with the Housing Authority, and with community-based organizations. Linkages have also been established with private sector organizations for contract development and job placement. With increasing visibility, potential employers of corpsmembers have initiated more and more requests.

The SFCC also has good working relationships with other Bay Area conservation corps as well as the state-run program (CCC).

Variations for the Summer Program

The summer program operates semi-autonomously. Since the demonstration/pilot, which ran in the summer of 1983, the program has been a somewhat separate entity with its own staff, its own work projects and its own homebase. It differs from the year-round program in the following ways:

- The summer program has a separate director, hired just for the summer, who runs the program autonomously within the basic parameters of the SFCC.
- There is one major hiring period prior to the summer and one replacement hiring period within the first two weeks of the eight-week program.
- It hires somewhat younger corpsmembers, ages 16-21 (rather than 18-23).
- Many, if not most, of the summer corpsmembers are still in high school or are planning post-secondary education. Thus it is by and large a more academically skilled group than that in the year-round corps.
- The education program focuses more on enrichment than on basic skills, given the nature of the population and the limited time period of the program.
- Funding and work sponsors may differ from those in the year-round corps. For the summer of 1985, some projects were sponsored by MOCD and GGNRA.
- The summer program is somewhat less strict in enforcing the SFCC's general rules.

While the summer program is largely independent from the year-round corps, there is some overlap between the two programs. Administrative support and project coordination is provided by year-round staff. And in both 1984 and 1985, crew supervisors who had been hired for the summer were asked to continue as supervisors in the regular program; and a few summer corpsmembers (among those not in school) stayed on in the regular corps program after the summer ended.

During the summer of 1985, the summer program operated with five crews and by the sixth week had about 54 corpsmembers. It was based at a building in lower Fort Mason separate from the regular year-round program. The corpsmembers gathered in a parking lot in the morning for PT (less rigorous and less enforced than in the regular program), and were then dispatched to work sites.

The summer program's autonomy is considered advantageous, but is closely watched. Since it is identified as the SFCC, the year-round program's reputation is at risk if its leadership does not exercise a certain degree of supervision or quality control. On the other hand, the summer program is able to develop its own strength, identity and esprit de corps while not detracting from the year-round program by draining its staff, as has occurred, for example, in the Marin Conservation Corps.

IV. THE CORPSMEMBERS

This chapter focuses on the corpsmembers -- their characteristics; how they are recruited, hired and trained; and when and why they leave. Data on corpsmembers came from several sources: observation and interviews at the corps, program records, and the SFCC's management information system (MIS). The MIS was installed in April 1985 and contains information about the numbers and characteristics of enrollees, their attitudes and behavior, movement through the program, attrition and work projects.

This interim report reviews the experience of the corps from its start-up through November 1985, and is based on field observations and data collected during that period only. During 1985, the corps changed many of its recruitment methods, made efforts to attract specific groups of corpsmembers, including women, Hispanics and Asians, and took steps to increase attendance and tenure through wage and other incentives. Because of these steps, the kinds of corpsmembers who enroll and their typical attrition experience are still evolving. It does not seem reasonable, therefore, to undertake a sophisticated analysis of these early data. For this reason, data presented here are largely descriptive. Characteristics of corpsmembers who entered after November 1985, attrition experience beyond that date, and additional analyses of the relationships among some of these data will be presented in the final SFCC case report.

These data are important to examine for three reasons. First, one of the goals of the SFCC is diversity. It seeks to enroll corpsmembers from each of the major ethnic groups in the city, individuals with high school diplomas and without, men and women. An analysis of the characteristics of the youth points to the extent the corps is meeting this goal. Second, the program is untargeted. Given that it does not restrict eligibility on the basis of income, it is interesting to see whether the corps can attract youth at risk in the labor market, or whether such youth stay away from the program. Finally, the corps receives much of its support from public funds. While most of these funds are directed towards improvements in public space, there is an underlying assumption that public funds should go towards those in need. Thus, an important question is whether the corps, and other untargeted youth service and conservation corps, serve sufficient numbers of at-risk youth to justify the use of public funds.

The best way to provide definitive answers to these questions would be to examine characteristics of corpsmembers, attrition, reasons for separation and the like for many incoming cohorts of corpsmembers and to track each corpsmember from entrance to separation. This would provide a picture of the corps' experience over a time period sufficient to smooth out seasonal or one-time

events, to measure the results of changes in recruitment and approaches to retaining corpsmembers, and to avoid biases resulting from truncated data. In particular, one would like to look at enrollment and attrition patterns for corpsmembers who entered the corps once it moved from start-up to more mature functioning.

Because the MIS was installed in April 1985, it was possible to obtain information from any corpsmember who was active at that time, regardless of when he or she entered the corps, and from all corpsmembers who enrolled after that date. This report does not, of course, contain the separation experience of all corpsmembers who enrolled during that period, since some are still active. The data base also does not contain information on all corpsmembers who ever enrolled in the SFCC, nor from all those who enrolled during a full year. This is because data were not collected retroactively from corpsmembers who had already left the program in April. Thus, data presented in this interim report are limited, and should be interpreted with caution. More definitive analyses will be presented in the final SFCC case report.

From its start in the summer of 1983, through November 1985, 567 corpsmembers enrolled. Of these, 361 were active on or after April 1, 1985 and data about them are included in the MIS. While the corps kept some records before the MIS was in place, they were not as extensive as the information reported here. Analyses are restricted to those corpsmembers for whom a full set of data was available. Of these 361 corpsmembers, 298 were enrolled for some time in the year-round program and 63 in the 1985 summer corps.

On November 15th, 88 corpsmembers were active (85 from the year-round program and three who had remained from the summer). The remaining 273 corpsmembers had left the corps. Because there is nearly constant entry and exit from the corps, the composition of the corps is always changing. November 15th was chosen to illustrate the composition of the corps on a typical day towards the end of the time period covered by the interim report.

Characteristics of Corpsmembers

The San Francisco Conservation Corps aims to employ residents between the ages of 18 and 23, representing the diverse, multi-ethnic population of the city. It does not specifically target disadvantaged youth, but casts its net in the neighborhoods, seeking referrals of unemployed and out-of-school youth. It is looking for a work force to benefit the city, but is also seeking to provide training and a growth experience for its participants.

Table 1 displays the demographic characteristics of year-round corpsmembers who were active at some time between April and November 1985 (referred to in tables as "all year-round corpsmem-

Table 1
Characteristics of Corpsmembers

	<u>All Year-Round Corpsmembers (n=298)</u>	<u>Active Corpsmembers (n=88)</u>
<u>Sex</u>		
Male	68%	69%
Female	32	31
<u>Race/Ethnicity</u>		
Black	47%	35%
White	10	7
Hispanic	31	39
Asian	10	17
Other	2	2
<u>Difficulty with English</u>	16%	26%
<u>Age</u>		
16-17	5%	5%
18	20	14
19-20	38	35
21-22	26	29
23	10	14
Mean age	20	20
<u>Education - Highest Grade Completed</u>		
10th or lower	20%	26%
11th	28	23
12th	46	45
13th or higher	6	6
High school diploma	41%	40%
GED	8	7
Neither	51	53
<u>Household Status</u>		
Primary wage earner	20%	11%
Single	91	92
Child responsibilities	13	11

Table 1 (Cont'd)

Income Status

Percent received AFDC or
foodstamps in six months
before joining SFCC

13%

16%

Percent employed in last
six months before join-
ing SFCC

37%

34%

Hourly wage on pre-SFCC job:
(of the 37% of corpsmembers
working only)

Less than \$3.35

4%

4%

\$3.35

31

39

\$3.36 - \$4.50

34

28

\$4.51 - \$5.99

18

14

\$6.00 or more

13

15

Mean pre-SFCC hourly wage

\$4.27 per hr.

\$4.27 per
hr.

bers"), as well as the characteristics of the group active on November 15th (referred to as "active corpsmembers"). As the table indicates, about two-thirds of the year-round corps was male and one-third female. The ratio of males to females was the same both for all year-round and active corpsmembers.

The SFCC under-enrolls women compared to their proportion in the population. This is not surprising given the kind of physical work done by the corps, which is generally considered to be non-traditional employment for women. The proportion of women in the SFCC is the same as the proportion of women enrolled in the non-residential CCC centers, where the same kind of physical conservation work is done. It is lower than in corps like the New York City Volunteer Corps or Katimavik that do human service work as well as physical projects.

The corps does serve youth from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Considering all enrollees, 47 percent were black, 31 percent Hispanic, 10 percent Asian and 10 percent white. Two percent fell into some other racial or ethnic category. Sixteen percent of corpsmembers in the year-round program reported difficulty with English. Looking only at corpsmembers active in November, there were proportionately more Hispanic (39%) and Asian (17%) and fewer black (35%) and white (7%) corpsmembers; more than one-quarter (26%) of active corpsmembers spoke English as a second language.

Some of the difference in the racial/ethnic composition between all corpsmembers and the group active in November was the result of changes in recruiting patterns over the year -- the program deliberately sought more Hispanic and Asian enrollment -- and some was the result of differences in attrition among various groups, as will be shown later.

Interestingly, the corps attracted a nearly equal number of high school graduates and those who did not complete high school, even though the program is not targeted on the basis of education. Forty-nine percent of all year-round corpsmembers had a high school diploma (41% had a regular diploma and 8% a GED); the remaining 51 percent had neither. About the same was true for active corpsmembers. Forty-seven percent had either a high school diploma or GED; 53 percent had neither. Six percent of all corpsmembers, and 6 percent of active corpsmembers had completed at least some college.

Although the mean age for corpsmembers was 20, the corps includes youth ranging in age from 16 to 24. Sixty-four percent of all year-round corpsmembers were between the ages of 19 and 22; one-quarter were younger, another 11 percent were older at the time

they joined the corps.* The same proportion (64%) of the active corpsmembers were between the ages of 19 and 22. Nineteen percent were 18 or younger, 17 percent 23 or older.

Considering the hours and pay rate for the corps, it is not surprising that the corps attracts corpsmembers with few family responsibilities. The corps is less successful in recruiting youth who are responsible for supporting themselves and/or children. Nearly all corpsmembers in the sample were single (91 percent of all enrollees and 92 percent of active corpsmembers). Only 20 percent of those ever enrolled, and 11 percent of those active are the primary wage earners in their families; 13 percent of all enrollees and 11 percent of those active had children living with them for whom they were responsible. Only 16 women with children were enrolled in the year-round program.

Finally, the economic backgrounds of the year-round corpsmembers were quite varied. While 13 percent of all enrollees (16% of those active) received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or food stamps in the six months before they entered the corps, approximately one-third (37% of all enrollees and 34% of active corpsmembers) had a job during the same time period. The mean wage from their most recent job for corpsmembers who worked was \$4.27 per hour. Many were paid minimum wage or less (35% of all year-round and 43% of the active corps). However, a substantial number had jobs that paid more than \$4.50 an hour (31% of all and 29% of active corpsmembers). Thirteen percent of all enrollees and 15 percent of active corpsmembers reported that they had worked in jobs paying \$6.00 an hour or more.

From these data, it appears that the corps serves substantial numbers of youth who were not economically self-sufficient before entering the corps -- they were either not working or were receiving AFDC or food stamps or both in the six months before they joined the SFCC. The extent to which the corps serves at-risk youth (defined as those who would be eligible for JTPA, or who have dropped out of high school, or both) will be analyzed in the final report. From these preliminary data, however, it appears that approximately 79 percent of all year-round corpsmembers and 82 percent of those active in November will probably meet this definition of being at risk, based on being unemployed for at least six months, not having a high school diploma, having received AFDC or Food Stamps in the six months before joining the corps, or some combination of these.

One of the SFCC's youth development goals is to produce responsible, active citizens of San Francisco. As will be described more fully in a later chapter, steps to accomplish this include

*About five percent of all corpsmembers reported that they were younger than 18 when they enrolled in the corps; one percent reported that they were older than twenty-three, although the corps requires corpsmembers to be 18-23 years old when they enter.

having corpsmembers donate blood, having corpsmembers from different racial/ethnic backgrounds work together to promote understanding of cultural differences and similarities, scheduling discussions of political issues, and so on.

As one indication of whether the corps attracts youth who are interested in public service, data are collected that describe their volunteeristic behavior before joining the corps. Further, to see if being in the corps affects some basic values and feelings of self-confidence, data are collected that tap corpsmembers feelings of self-worth and racial/sexual attitudes. These items are asked both when corpsmembers enroll and again when they separate. Whether or not corpsmembers' answers to these items change from intake to separation will be examined in the final SFCC case report and in other reports on issues of interest to all corps. Preliminary data describing the attitudes and behavior of year-round corpsmembers when they entered are shown in Table 2.

Few of the corpsmembers reported a high level of altruistic activity. Less than one in five reported having served as volunteers or donating blood before joining the corps. By contrast, more than 70 percent reported themselves to be fairly tolerant, that is, they did not object to women supervisors, supervisors not of their own race, or people from different backgrounds. Feelings of self-worth and self-confidence are less consistent. Thirty-two percent of incoming corpsmembers did not believe they could find a job, one-quarter felt they were "no good at all." Fewer than one in ten, however, felt that "things happen to me that I cannot control."

Recruitment

The SFCC is nonresidential and urban; joining does not require leaving home. Many try the corps and do not stay in the job long, lacking the motivation or tenacity to stay; there is a high degree of mobility in and out of the corps. Consequently a lot of time is spent spreading the word to attract new corpsmembers and retain a reasonable corpsmember complement. The staff member charged with recruitment claims to spend about 60 percent of his work time on recruitment or recruitment-related activities, including interviewing youth. Some of this is direct and deliberate recruiting activity such as presentations at hiring halls and community-based organizations, and school recruitment activity. Some is an indirect part of other community relations activities and public presentations.

Most often, particularly early in the corps history, the recruitment process was not specifically directed towards particular groups. The unfocused method produced many recruits, including large numbers of blacks and males. Since the spring of 1985, deliberate efforts have been made to recruit more Hispanics, Asians, whites and females.

Table 2

Attitudes and Behavior of Corpsmembers
(at intake)

All Year-Round
Corpsmembers
(n = 298)

Altruistic Behavior
Percent gave blood in
last 12 months

5%

Percent helped in community
or neighborhood in last
12 months

14%

Percent ever volunteered to
work for a charity political
or public issue

14%

AttitudesSelf-Worth

Agree Strongly/
Agree

Disagree Strongly/
Disagree

A lot of things
happen to me that
I cannot control

25%

59%

At times I think I
am no good at all

9

73

I am not sure I can
get a job when I
want to

32

54

Racial/Sexual Stereotypes

I would prefer to work
with people of my own
race or ethnic back-
ground

8%

71%

It would bother me to
have a supervisor of
another race than my own

7

79

It is better not to have a
woman as your supervisor

9

74

Tables 3 and 4 describe how corpsmembers report that they first heard about the SFCC. As Table 3 illustrates, almost half (48%) of corpsmembers first learned about the corps through word of mouth from a friend. Compared to word of mouth, all other referral sources were far less important; each accounts for less than 10 percent of how corpsmembers first heard about the corps. Nine percent of corpsmembers learned first from a community based organization, 8 percent directly from staff presentations, and 8 percent from articles in newspapers. Only 4 percent of corpsmembers first heard of the SFCC in high school, 2 percent from television, 1 percent in an employment and training program. All other referral sources together account for 14 percent of referrals.

The fact that word of mouth produced the largest number of enrollees has been beneficial for the corps. Once recruiting efforts had been directed to particular groups through presentations and media articles a "snowball" effect began and it became increasingly easy for the corps to attract members of those groups. Word of mouth, begun by the efforts of the recruiting staff, did have the desired effect of increasing diversity among corpsmembers.

To see how the SFCC might best continue targeted recruitment, how corpsmembers first heard about the corps was analyzed for different groups of corpsmembers. These data are shown in Table 4.

The table indicates that women were somewhat more likely than men to first hear about the SFCC through friends, and less likely to hear first through a community-based organization. Asians and white corpsmembers were less likely than all corpsmembers to be recruited through word of mouth. White corpsmembers were also more likely than minority corpsmembers to learn about the SFCC from the media. Recruitment patterns for Asians differed. Only 27 percent of Asians reported that they first heard about the SFCC through a friend; fully 45 percent cited some way of hearing about the corps from "other" sources, that is, from a source not listed elsewhere in the table. According to the SFCC recruiter, many Asian corpsmembers enroll directly after being contacted by the recruiter, thus, they first hear about the SFCC from the SFCC itself. Although there are slight differences in how people who were graduated from high school first heard about the SFCC compared to those who were never graduated, these do not seem to indicate a pattern.

Based on these data, it appears that the corps does have the means to alter its mix of corpsmembers by emphasizing different recruitment strategies. In fact, because these strategies tend

Table 3

How Corpsmembers First Heard About the SFCC

<u>All Corpsmembers</u>	(n = 223)
Friend	48%
Community-based organization	9
Presentation by staff	8
Newspaper	8
High school	4
Radio	4
Another advertisement (not radio, tv or paper)	3
Television	2
Other school (not high school)	1
All other sources	14

Table 4

How Corpsmembers First Heard About the SFCC
by Characteristics of Corpsmembers

	<u>Friend</u>	<u>Media</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>CBO</u>	<u>Other</u>
<u>Sex</u>					
Male	43%	15%	6%	11%	25%
Female	56	19	3	6	16
<u>Ethnicity</u>					
Black	53%	14%	4%	10%	19%
White	42	33	4	-	21
Hispanic	50	15	4	12	19
Asian	27	9	14	5	45
<u>Education</u>					
High school diploma or GED	46%	19%	7%	6%	23%
Neither	50	15	3	11	20
<u>Overall</u>	48%	17%	5%	9%	22%

to snowball, recruitment staff can purposefully target one group, and then move on to another even before the results of the first effort are completely visible. The data also indicate that there are some referral sources that are producing only a few corpsmembers. In particular, it appears that high schools and community-based organizations are currently under-utilized. Thus, they might be promising sources of new recruits.

The Hiring Process

Potential "hires" are invited to visit the corps for one day (usually a Wednesday). When they visit, they participate in the morning workout. After the crews are dispatched to their work-sites, they fill out an application and are interviewed, either by the executive director or the recruiter. If they have not shown up in time to participate in the workout, they are told to come back the following week for an interview -- an early statement of the program's standards. The interview determines the background and eligibility of the applicant, and it also serves as preliminary orientation to the corps.

If the applicant is "hired," he/she is given an appointment for a fitting of boots and is told to report for work on the next scheduled hiring day. A hiring day occurs every three to four weeks. On very rare occasions, an applicant is not hired, usually because of negative attitudes exhibited during the interview.

Orientation and Training of New Hires

During most of the 1985 year, 20 to 25 applicants were hired in each hiring cycle; of these, typically 20 percent did not show up on the first day. Thus, the hiring process is itself a screen, since it results indirectly in self-selection of those who show. Newcomers (referred to as "newbies") are told that if they are even one minute late during the first week, they are fired. As a result, as many as 30 to 50 percent of the newbies who do show in any given intake cycle do not last the first two weeks.

Newbies are given two days of orientation/training. The first day is at Fort Mason, and consists of presentations by staff, explanation of rules and procedures, filling out of forms, some testing for the educational program, some training in the use of tools, and a short work exercise, usually at Fort Mason.

The second day of training occurs at a work site, and usually consists of hard, straightforward physical labor such as clearing trees, bushes and debris. According to SFCC staff, this day accomplishes several purposes: to demonstrate the type of work that is expected and to provide an opportunity for a work supervisor to observe the newbies prior to assigning them to existing work crews with vacancies due to attrition. By the third day of the program, a newbie is assigned to a permanent crew.

Attrition

The SFCC operates with a great deal of turnover. As one method of instilling excellent work habits, the corps places great emphasis on requiring corpsmembers to adhere to its rules for lateness and attendance, and makes these rules clear from the outset. While the corps expects these policies to result in a certain amount of turnover, they believe the benefit to those who stay offsets some of the burden of continual recruitment.

Of the 298 year-round corpsmembers active at any given time from April to November 1985, 213, or 71 percent, were no longer active by November 15th. The mean length of stay for all corpsmembers was 86 days. For separated corpsmembers, mean length of stay was 58 days; for those still active in November, mean length of stay -- truncated at November 15th -- was 155 days, or nearly three times that of separated corpsmembers.

Table 5 displays the SFCC's attrition experience for all corpsmembers who were enrolled in the corps at any time from April to November 1985. This includes corpsmembers who enrolled between April and November, as well as those who were active on April 1, regardless of when they enrolled. Length of stay in the program was calculated as the days from actual hire date, even if it was earlier than April 1, 1985, to actual separation date, or November 15, 1985 if a corpsmember had not separated by that time. Thus, length of stay is artificially bound by the November 15th cutoff point. This limits length of stay for active corpsmembers, but not for those who had separated by that time.

The first column shows the aggregate experience of the corps, including active and separated corpsmembers. It indicates that overall, about one in five corpsmembers was in the program for less than one week, about one in four for longer than four months. As was noted earlier, the mean length of stay for all corpsmembers is about three months.

The column is somewhat misleading, however, since it averages the experiences of both active and separated corpsmembers. Their separate attrition experiences are displayed in columns two and three. These data indicate that, first, about half of all corpsmembers who left (51%) left in their first month with the corps; only 14 percent left after having been with the program at least four months. Fully one-fourth left in the first week. These data and data on reason for separation presented later indicate that the application of strict rules in the first week contributes greatly to high turnover.

Second, however, while the active corps in November was still relatively new to the SFCC (23% had been in the corps two months or less), about half (56%) of the active corpsmembers had passed the four month mark. There are two reasons for this. First, as was just noted, corpsmembers who leave seem to leave early. Con-

Table 5

Attrition Information

<u>Time in the Program</u>	<u>All Year-Round Corpsmembers (n=298)</u>	<u>Active Corpsmembers (n=88)</u>	<u>Separated Year- round Corps- members (n=213)</u>
1 - 7 days	18%	--%	25%
8 - 28 days	23	14	26
29 - 56 days	16	9	19
57 - 112 days	17	21	16
113 days or more	26	56	14
Mean length of stay in days:	86 days	155 days	58 days

versely, then, one would expect active corpsmembers to have been in the program longer on average than everyone who had ever enrolled. However, the data also suggest that over time, the corps is increasing its ability to retain corpsmembers. If this is true, one would expect to see the ratio of new corpsmembers to more experienced corpsmembers decline, and the mean length of stay for all active corpsmembers increase.

Table 6 illustrates the extent to which this is the case. It shows corpsmember strength (the number of active corpsmembers) on the 15th of each month, as well as the mean length of stay for those corpsmembers. Note that while corpsmember strength stayed relatively constant (varying from 67 to 88), the mean length of stay after June increased, though this trend was not completely smooth. This means that while the SFCC continued to experience substantial turnover, more and more corpsmembers stayed longer.

Table 7 looks at the relationship between attrition and various corpsmember characteristics.

- Attrition rates were remarkably similar for men and women.
- Corpsmembers who did not complete high school were substantially more likely to leave during the first week than those with high school diplomas, although, by the end of four months, about the same proportion of both groups remained (15% of graduates and 14% of dropouts).
- The key demographic factor related to length of stay in the program was racial/ethnic background. About a quarter of all blacks, whites and Asians left in the first week, compared to only 19 percent of Hispanics. However, by the end of one month, while 63 percent of black enrollees and 48 percent of white enrollees had left the corps, only 34 percent of Hispanics and 47 percent of Asians were separated. Even more startling, fully 33 percent of Asians were still in the program after four months, compared to only 11 percent of blacks, 12 percent of whites and 17 percent of Hispanics. In addition, corps staff had the impression that Asian corpsmembers were most likely to be graduated after a full year.

In order to sort out the contribution of each of these factors to length of stay in the corps, a regression analysis was undertaken. This analysis predicts length of stay controlling for sex, race, high school retention, primary wage earning responsibility, and whether or not the corpsmember had children living with them. The results are presented in Table 8. The first column lists the variables used in the model. For categorical variables (e.g. ethnicity, gender) dummy variables were used.

Table 6

Mean Length of Stay of Active Corpsmembers
by Month

<u>Month</u>	<u>Corpsmember Strength</u>	<u>Mean Length of Stay, in Days</u>
April, 1985	69	111
May	75	110
June	67	136
July	68	145
August	73	154
September	67	153
October	87	138
November	88	139
December	72	179
January, 1986	64	210

Table 7
Length of Stay in SFCC
for Separated Corpsmembers
by Characteristics of Corpsmembers
(n=213)

		<u>1-7 days</u>	<u>8-28 days</u>	<u>28-112 days</u>	<u>Longer than 113 days</u>
<u>Sex</u>					
Male	100%	26%	24%	35%	15%
Female	100	24	29	34	13
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>					
Black	100%	28%	35%	26%	11%
White	100	28	20	40	12
Hispanic	100	19	15	49	17
Asian	100	27	20	20	33
<u>Education</u>					
High School	100%	19%	29%	37%	15%
Not High School	100	31	22	33	14
<u>Reason for Separation, of those Separated</u>					
Voluntary Separation	100%	13%	30%	39%	18%
Involuntary Separation	100%	29	28	35	8
<u>Overall</u>		25%	26%	35%	14%

Table 8

Regression to Predict Length of
Stay in the Corps for Separated Corpsmembers

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Parameter Estimate</u>
Intercept (Constant)	-36.2
Age	3.3
Asian	20.3
Black	-65.3*
White	-68.4
Married	-90.5
Male	10.7
AFDC	-18.1
Primary wage earner	62.9*
Number in household	12.2*
Household income	3.5
High school graduate	35.2
Has dependent children	49.5

*Indicates significantly different from the non-included variable at the .05 level. The reference category for racial/ethnic identification is Hispanic.

The second column lists the effect on length of stay, in days. Postive numbers means more days compared to the reference variable; negative numbers mean fewer days. The third column indicates which effects are statistically significant at the .05 level. The regression confirms that ethnicity has an effect on length of stay in the corps, even controlling for the other variables included in the model. Specifically, blacks were significantly different from Hispanics; on average, they stayed in the corps 65 days less. While other race/ethnicity effects are not statistically significant compared to the reference variable, the effects are of the magnitude and direction that one would expect given the findings reported earlier.

In addition, primary wage earners were more likely than other corpsmembers to stay in the program; they stayed on average two months longer than those without this responsibility. Number in household also predicts length of stay. On average, corpsmembers stayed twelve days longer for each additional person in their household. This finding is difficult to interpret, although its direction and magnitude again are consistent with earlier data.

While the regression deepens an understanding of the attrition experience of the SFCC, it, like other attrition findings, must be interpreted with caution. As was noted earlier, the data on which the regression is based extended for only a few months, at a time when the composition of the corps, its recruitment policy and the level of turnover appeared to be changing; further, there is a serious truncation problem for active corpsmembers. Thus, these findings are preliminary only. This analysis will be repeated on a fuller data set in the final report.

Reasons for Separation

Corpsmembers who did leave the corps are about equally divided between those who left voluntarily and those who were fired.* Forty percent of year-round corpsmembers left on their own (Table 9). Twelve percent left to take a job, 6 percent left for school or training; the remaining 22 percent voluntarily left the program for other reasons (e.g., family responsibilities, to look for work, dissatisfaction with the corps).

*Only 3 percent of the corpsmembers included in this data base left because they completed the program. This number is low because it includes only those corpsmembers who were active on or after April 1st but had completed a full year by November 15th. The proportion of corpsmembers who complete a year will be higher once the data set includes more months of data collection. It is difficult to predict what the actual proportion will be. As an indication, as of March 1986, approximately 10 percent of all corpsmembers who might have completed a full year (they entered the corps before March, 1985) were graduated from the corps at twelve months.

Table 9

Reason for Separation for Year-Round Corpsmembers
(n=213)

Separation Reason

● Completed	3%
● Voluntary	40%
- Take a job	12
- School/training	6
- Look for work	2
- Health/pregnancy	1
- Moved away	5
- Family needs	2
- Dissatisfied with corps	2
- Other (stopped attending, quit)	10
● Involuntary	57%
- Attendance	37
- Poor performance	12
- Insubordination	3
- Fighting	2
- Criminal acts/weapons	1
- Alcohol/drugs	2

Fifty-seven percent of the corpsmembers who left were fired. Two-thirds of those (65%) were fired because of poor attendance, 21 percent were told to leave because of poor performance. Other infractions of the rules (fighting, criminal acts, etc.) account for the remaining 14 percent of involuntary dismissals.

As was noted earlier and in Table 10, a weeding out process occurs in the first week a corpsmember is enrolled. Three-fourths (72%) of those who left in the first week were fired; only 23 percent left that early voluntarily. After the end of one month, about half of separations were voluntary and half involuntary. After four months, only about a third were fired. Apparently, then, corpsmembers who survived the first week became more and more likely to leave of their own accord. Even so, a substantial proportion of those who left after four months did so because of an infraction of the rules.

Reasons for separation differ for different groups of corpsmembers. Table 11 displays reasons for separation grouped into five categories. The first two can be considered positive, the second two negative, and the last neutral. The first column shows the proportion of corpsmembers who went directly from the corps to a job or school. All other reasons that corpsmembers voluntarily left (health, family responsibilities, to move, or just failed to return to work) are grouped together in the second column. By far the most commonly cited reason was poor attendance. The third column shows the proportion of corpsmembers leaving for this reason. Other negative separations, such as for drinking, poor work habits and so on, are shown in the fourth column. Administrative separations, including completing twelve months with the corps, are in column five.

According to these data, whites, Hispanics and Asians were about equally likely to leave the corps to go to a job, school or training. All three groups were more likely than black corpsmembers to do so. Women, those with a high school diploma, and those supporting themselves or families were also more likely than their counterparts to leave for school or employment.

It is interesting to note that the same groups were generally the ones least likely to be fired because of inadequate attendance. This is not surprising. Since attendance in the first week determines whether or not one will stay with the corps, those who survived were probably more committed or more work-ready than those who did not. These same kinds of people are likely to be the corpsmembers whom the program later recommends when a job or training opportunity becomes available, or who seek out these opportunities for themselves. However, this is an explanation based on individual, not group, behavior.

Table 10

Reason for Leaving the Corps by Length of Stay

<u>Time in Program</u>	<u>Take job/ school</u>	<u>Other Voluntary</u>	<u>Poor Attendance</u>	<u>Other Involuntary</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
1 - 7 days	2%	21%	58%	14%	5%
8 - 28 days	17	26	35	20	2
29-112 days	22	22	29	27	-
113 days or more	29	15	23	8	15
Overall	18	22	37	20	3

Table 11
Reason for Leaving the Corps
by Characteristics of Corpsmembers
(n= 213)

<u>Sex</u>	<u>Take Job/ School</u>	<u>Other Voluntary</u>	<u>Poor Attendance</u>	<u>Other Involuntary</u>	<u>Neutral</u>
Male	17%	15%	41%	24%	3%
Female	21	36	28	10	5
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>					
Black	9%	18%	44%	27%	2%
White	32	32	23	14	-
Hispanic	27	21	36	12	4
Asian	29	29	21	-	21
<u>Education</u>					
High School					
Diploma	27%	23%	29%	19%	2%
No High School					
Diploma	9	21	46	20	5
<u>Primary Wage Earner</u>					
Yes	23%	30%	26%	19%	2%
No	17	20	40	19	4

The fact that these differences exist across groups means that other explanations also should be sought. It may be that different recruiting methods bring in youth with different skills, motivation and work readiness, and that these different recruiting sources are associated with the demographic characteristics of enrollees. For example, one would assume that more work-ready corpsmembers are found in schools, less work-ready corpsmembers through community-based organizations who treat troubled youth. If the community-based organization refers from its local constituency and is in a black neighborhood, that could account for some of the observed differences in reasons for leaving the SFCC. In addition, it may be that because the corps enrolls fewer members of some groups (women, Asians) than others, the people from these groups who do enroll have self-selected or been screened to a greater degree. Finally, since the program appears to have a disparate effect on certain groups of corpsmembers, at least based on these preliminary data, one cannot rule out the possibility of intentional or unintentional bias.

Based on our observations, it does appear that the program applies its rules with the same force to everyone. While this ensures that the program treats all corpsmembers alike, it means that the least prepared corpsmembers, those who have already exhibited difficulty succeeding in school or the work force, will only survive in the corps if they can adjust in the first days and weeks.

Characteristics and Attrition of Summer Corpsmembers

The Summer Corps operates largely as a separate program, with its own cohort of corpsmembers. About 137 people have been enrolled in the summer corps, 34 in 1983, approximately 40 in 1984, and 63 in 1985. Table 12 displays the demographic characteristics of corpsmembers who enrolled in the summer corps during 1985. As was noted in an earlier section of this report, summer corpsmembers are younger and more likely still to be in high school than are year-round corpsmembers. During 1985, half (51%) were sixteen or younger, 79 percent did not have a high school diploma, half (52%) were in grades eight through ten. As in the year-round program, about two-thirds (60%) were male.

The ethnic composition of the summer corps is slightly different from that of the year-round program. The summer program does attract mostly minority youth and youth from each of the major cultural groups in San Francisco. Fourteen percent report difficulty with English. However, the summer corps serves more white youth (15%), and many more Asian youth (35%) than the year-round program. As one would expect with younger corpsmembers, fewer (6%) are primary wage earners in their families. About a fifth (22%) received AFDC or food stamps in the six months before joining the summer corps.

Table 12

Characteristics of Summer Corpsmembers
(n=63)

Sex

Male	60%
Female	40

Race/Ethnicity

Black	29%
White	15
Hispanic	18
Asian	35
Other	3

Education - Highest Grade Completed

8th - 10th	52%
11th	25
12th	20
13th	3
High school diploma	16%
GED	5
Neither	79

Age

14 - 15	13%
16	38
17	17
18	16
19+	16

Received AFDC or Foodstamps
in Last Six Months

22%

Primary Wage Earner

6%

Difficulty with English

14%

Finally, in terms of attrition, most (72%) of the summer enrollees completed the program. This is partly the case because the program is short, only eight weeks, but may also reflect the relatively higher proportions of Asians and students. Twelve percent of the summer corpsmembers left voluntarily before the program ended, and seventeen percent were told to leave. By far the major reason (10%) for leaving was inadequate attendance.

Conclusion

The corps appears to be meeting some of its corpsmember goals, although there are areas that need to be strengthened. It serves both men and women, youth of different ages and work backgrounds, and representatives of most of the major ethnic groups living in San Francisco. In fact, the SFCC has been more successful than many corps in attracting an ethnically diverse population, largely because of purposive recruiting efforts. In spite of this diversity, however, the typical corpsmember in November was likely to be male, from a minority, and free of family responsibilities. The SFCC, like some other urban, non-residential corps, would have to continue recruiting women aggressively to reach a more even distribution within the corps.

Although the program is untargeted, it attracts substantial numbers of youth who are not economically self-sufficient at the time they enter the corps. Many corpsmembers met a strict definition of being at risk because they had not worked or had receive AFDC or food stamps in the six months before they joined the corps, they did not have a high school diploma of any kind, or some combination of these. Only about one-fifth of the corps seems to come from a more advantaged population. Thus, the SFCC may not be getting the benefits of an untargeted program; it may want to recruit specifically to widen the economic diversity of corpsmembers. Having a slightly larger number of advantaged youth could broaden the corps' constituency and prevent it from becoming viewed as a program only for poor or at-risk youth. In addition, more work-ready or educated corpsmembers could act as models for others.

The SFCC, like many other corps, has a high rate of attrition. While the corps expects to experience turnover -- it has deliberately high standards designed to teach employability skills to corpsmembers -- the level of attrition that occurred in the early months of 1985 may have been dysfunctional. High turnover and poor attendance caused the corps to fall short of some of its production goals, and to lose funds that would have come from meeting these goals.

Very few corpsmembers who enter SFCC stay for the full twelve months. While all corps experience attrition (only 18% of corpsmembers stay in the CCC for twelve months, compared to 16% of Marin enrollees, and 70% of those who enter Katimavik), the

average length of stay in 1985 in the SFCC was shorter than the average length of stay for these other corps. Because much of SFCC's attrition occurred early in the program, few corpsmembers stayed a sufficient length of time to complete formal educational programs or to meet other youth development goals. In addition, the constant need to replace corpsmembers -- to recruit, hire, train and process them -- placed a strain on the staff. Finally, because corpsmembers must adapt instantly or be fired, the program may be losing potentially able young people. This is particularly serious because attrition does not occur randomly across different groups of corpsmembers; the program retains some kinds of people -- Asians and Hispanics, for example -- more than others. In the long run, non-random patterns of attrition could cost the SFCC some of the diversity it has worked hard to develop.

It does appear that the steps taken to slow attrition, such as regular pay increases and promotions, are having an effect. Corpsmembers appear to be staying in the program longer. It will be important to see over the next few months whether this trend continues and what effect this has on the program, as well as the extent to which the corps is able to meet its youth development and work goals as a result.

V. WORK

A major strength of the SFCC is its focus on productive physical work. This feature is of particular interest to many who are concerned about the feasibility of doing conservation-related work in an urban environment. This chapter describes the work projects of the SFCC, including:

- the goals of the work component;
- how the work projects are developed;
- the nature and scope of the work projects;
- how they are carried out and supervised; and
- an assessment of the quality of the work.

GOALS OF THE WORK COMPONENT

The work component cuts across the corps' multiple goals. The work program's goal is to complete quality work on projects that improve the public land, space, facilities and environment of San Francisco. But work projects are also viewed as a strategy to train youth in discipline, hard work and employability skills, and as an opportunity for youth to experience increased self-esteem through the satisfaction gained from completing valuable projects.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK PROJECTS

The approach to developing work projects has gone through several stages during the first summer program, the first full year and the current period. Work projects are developed and managed in different ways for different funding sources. In this section, we describe the development of work projects and how they have evolved.

The First Summer

The first summer demonstration was funded with SYEP funds, corporate and foundation dollars, and through a contract with the State Department of Forestry. The director of the project at that time used her personal network and the assistance of steering committee members to get sponsorship of work projects from the city's Department of Recreation and Parks, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and the San Francisco Unified School District. During the summer of 1983, crews completed work

projects for these organizations. Tasks included landscaping, park clearing, and painting of historic ships.

There was a deliberate attempt to establish linkages with these and other organizations so that future work projects could be developed. The satisfaction expressed by work sponsors during the early stages helped establish the reputation of the corps.

The First Year of the Permanent Corps

The first major award of funds from the City of San Francisco occurred in September 1983. The Mayor committed \$580,000 of Community Development Block Grant Funds to the SFCC. These "public service" dollars (rather than "public space" dollars, which came later), allowed for flexibility in work projects. Public service funds paid for corpsmember and supervisor wages, but were not tied to specific work projects. The project coordinator and other staff had to undertake major responsibility for developing work projects since they were not pre-specified by the grant. Sponsors were solicited from city agencies and community-based agencies. They were not required to supply money or materials. The nature of the work projects was determined by the work sponsors and their technical staff, along with the SFCC project coordinator and staff.

1985 and Beyond; Grants from City and State

Things changed with the 1985 CDBG grant. In that year, \$1 million was committed to the SFCC from public space funds by the Mayor's Office of Community Development (MOCD). These funds were contingent on the completion of a pre-specified scope of work. The funds would be for labor and materials. Previously, work sponsors provided materials and the SFCC provided labor and supervision of the corpsmembers. This change and its attendant need to plan and order materials added new responsibilities for the SFCC staff and had important implications for administration.

In order to apply for funds, SFCC staff had to prepare estimates defining specific work projects, material needs and labor hours in advance. This required planning on the basis of estimated size of work crews and person-hours of work. MOCD prioritized the projects around the city which they wanted included in the scope of work. The remainder were proposed by the SFCC. This entailed negotiating with potential work sponsors through organizations such as the Housing Authority, the Department of Recreation and Parks, and various community-based organizations.

In order to qualify for improvements under the MOCD funding, certain criteria have to be met: the organizations or locations must serve low-income residents, have commitments for five-year leases (to show that they are stable), and propose outdoor improvement projects. For 1985, 32 projects were identified for

improvements in urban outdoor projects in parks, community centers, public housing areas, and other community-based organizations. The details of these projects were worked out by the work sponsors and their technical staff in conjunction with the SFCC project coordinator and staff.

A similar plan was developed for 1986 funds. The plan was submitted in June 1985; funds were approved in November and allocated in January 1986. As time has gone on, project development within the SFCC's responsibility (i.e., not those projects prioritized by the Mayor's office) has been a mix of SFCC staff initiative and response to requests from organizations and agencies that have become aware of the availability of SFCC services. SFCC has been building a reputation in the city as a competent work force.

Some requests do not match the guidelines and criteria of MOCD. For such cases, the SFCC is able to utilize another source of funds, those from the State of California, which are distributed to local corps through the CCC. This funding source began in September 1984 with the passage of SB2049. Use of these funds does not require pre-specification of work projects. Nor does it require that the SFCC provide materials. What it does require is that work projects have "public benefit," and that corpsmembers who work on them come from low-income neighborhoods and include minorities and high school dropouts.

In 1985, 48 work projects were identified for state funding, including work for GGNRA, parks, stadiums and daycare centers. The substance of the work, however, is very similar to that done for MOCD. Similar projects are also planned with foundation funds.

A third category of work projects is cost-reimbursed contracts. In the first 10 months of 1985, six contracts were negotiated with organizations such as the airport and the San Francisco Water Department.

NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE WORK PROJECTS

The nature and scope of the work projects at the SFCC has changed over time. In theory, the SFCC emphasizes hard work over specific skills acquisition. But the nature of the corps' work has been affected by both the dense urban setting's needs for more developed facilities and by the requirements of the specific funding sources supporting the program. These have resulted in work projects where corpsmembers are acquiring a variety of specific job skills -- more than originally anticipated. Although some projects are based on intensive unskilled or low-skilled work, others demand the use and development of more technical job-specific skills.

The nature and scope of the work and the need for technical direction vary somewhat by funding source and by work sponsors within a funding source. The following sections describe MOCD and CCC funded work projects. The MOCD and the CCC are the SFCC's two main funding sources.

MOCD: Public Space Improvement Projects

Rules governing the use of public space improvement dollars stipulate that the projects must not involve regular maintenance. The emphasis is on "substantial" public space improvements, which frequently require technical work skills. Since MOCD is the largest funding base for the SFCC, this requirement has resulted in a stretching of the capabilities of the work supervisors and the corps in general.

Three major sources of work projects sponsored by MOCD have been public housing projects, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department and a variety of community-based organizations. The work projects for these work sponsors have required varied skills and all have been rather substantial.

For example, work for public housing projects consisted of improvements to public play areas and grounds. These have included project components such as site preparation, the assembly of play equipment and recreational furniture, landscaping and light construction of outdoor facilities. The skills needed range from the simple -- for site clearing and some landscaping -- to the more complex -- assembly and installation of pre-fabricated structures requiring power tools, blueprint interpretations, and concrete and masonry work. Some projects may require all of these steps and, therefore, much planning and preparation on the part of the SFCC project coordinators and work supervisors. Such a project may require two to three months and corpsmembers may be involved in a variety of tasks until it is completed.

Projects for the Recreation and Parks Department are typically less technical than those for the Housing Authority. Most receive technical support from Parks Department personnel, but not specific blueprints; the SFCC work supervisor makes many project decisions. These projects are conservation-oriented and include erosion control, reforestation and trail work. Although requiring less skill than Housing Authority projects, these still provide a range of learning opportunities: erosion control projects may involve the construction of fairly complex railroad tie bulkheads that requires extensive site preparation including digging, trenching, soil moving, use of chainsaws and other hand tools; reforestation requires proper soil preparation, tree planting and the creation of proper drainage patterns around the trees. Corpsmembers must master some basic horticultural skills and knowledge to accomplish these tasks. Trail work can range from pruning and removal of vegetation with hand tools to the construction of hand railings and steps.

Additional projects entail yard improvements for daycare centers, senior centers and other community-based organizations. These projects were accomplished with the professional design assistance of the Mayor's Office of Community Development and two non-profit organizations which provide architectural design services on contract to the SFCC. Many of these projects were designed to better utilize very small amounts of outdoor space owned and/or used by non-profit organizations serving low/moderate-income San Francisco residents. The project components are quite similar to the Housing Authority projects (particularly in site preparation and landscaping), but in terms of the actual development of facilities, they rely much less on prefabricated structures. For example, work for two child care facilities in Chinatown has included construction of play houses, benches, sandboxes and planter boxes that were carefully tailored to meet size and use restrictions. Some of the work is very technical. At the Mission YWCA, the corps constructed an extensive deck to make steep portions of outdoor space usable. This involved careful project layout, leveling, use of a range of power and hand tools, and finish work. The SFCC hired a carpenter to help with project layout, planning and supervision.

State Funded Projects

Projects supported through CCC state funding must meet the CCC's public benefit criteria but do not include other more specific requirements for the worksites. Therefore, the SFCC typically uses this funding to balance the overall work program and to accomplish work for sponsors who could not meet the strict eligibility requirements of MOCD funding.

The range of work and skills is broader here than for MOCD funded projects. For example, it includes cutting fire breaks, clearing public lands, setting up for special events and assisting with crowd control. In addition, indoor work -- which is prescribed by MOCD -- has been accomplished with CCC funding. Community-based organizations have benefitted from building renovation, including painting, wall framing and construction, sheetrocking and minor electrical/plumbing work.

The SFCC has also sought opportunities for more skilled work through state funding. One example is the Wave Organ Project, in which a small number of corpsmembers have been working with the San Francisco Exploratorium to construct a concrete wave organ. This has required technical competence in concrete work and development of knowledge of how the wave organ works.

Most corpsmembers who have been in the SFCC for three months or more are likely to have worked on most of the types of projects described above, particularly the MOCD projects. Indoor work is less frequent.

The work projects vary not only in the tasks they involve but in the length of time they take to complete. MOCD work projects range from three crew weeks (based on an average daily crew attendance of nine corpsmembers) to 20 crew weeks. A review of work plans by the research team suggested that the average project was planned to take eight crew weeks.

Figure 3 lists work completed in 1985.

THE CONDUCT AND SUPERVISION OF WORK

Work projects are carried out by crews under the work supervisor. The work supervisor is assisted by the crew leader, a corpsmember who has been promoted into a leadership position. Each crew consists of nine to 12 corpsmembers. New hires are assigned to existing crews to replace corpsmembers who have left or who have been fired. The project coordinator works with the work supervisors on project planning and crew assignments. In some projects, the work sponsor plays an important role. In others, such as Housing Authority projects, SFCC staff have a fair amount of autonomy to plan and carry out the work. If the work sponsor has a technical supervisor at the site, he/she typically interacts with the SFCC supervisor rather than with corpsmembers directly.

Some projects require detailed planning. It is not unusual to see blueprints and drafting plans spread out in the workroom of the SFCC headquarters or at the worksite near the van. Some of the expense of preparing these plans is lowered by using them several times at different locations, as, for example, in the construction of playground equipment.

The nature of crew supervision at the worksites, as observed by the research team, varies during the course of a work project. The SFCC work supervisor provides instruction and oversight of crewmembers. At the beginning of a work project, especially if the crew has not done similar work before, or if many crew members are new, the work supervisor provides close instruction and supervision, including demonstrations to and working alongside corpsmembers. As the project becomes more routine, most supervisors spot check the work and spend a fair amount of time planning the next project, while the crew leader provides direct supervision. This typically occurs after working norms have been set. When crews were observed by the research team, most were working quite industriously. If the work supervisor was not there, the crew leader was. Rarely, if ever, were crewmembers left unsupervised.

Although the SFCC has accumulated a substantial stock of tools and equipment, additional supplies and materials must be ordered for MOCD-funded projects. This requires extensive planning,

Figure 3

SFCC Work Projects, 1985

<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Sponsor Name</u>	<u>Hours</u>
Argonne Children's Center	Argonne Children's Center	74.00
Booker T. Washington Community Center	Booker T. Washington Community Center	3,440.00
Buen Dia Family School	Buen Dia Family School	803.00
Cadillac Hotel	Cadillac Hotel	4,104.00
Canon Kip Roof Garden	Canon Kip Community House	1,728.00
Chinatown Community Childrens Center	Chinatown Community Childrens Center	1,728.00
Chinatown Library	Chinatown Library	42.00
City Celebration	City Celebration	225.00
Carolina & 22nd	Department of Public Works	360.00
Geary Boulevard	Department of Public Works	1,082.00
Lawton & 7th Avenue	Department of Public Works	286.00
Planting 3rd	Department of Public Works	256.00
Downtown YWCA	Downtown YWCA	1,400.00
Wildcat Canyon (BACCA)	East Bay Regional Park Dist.	474.00
Ella Hill Hutch Center	Ella Hill Hutch Center	1,152.00
Embarcadero YWCA	Embarcadero YWCA	1,400.00
Bay to Breakers	Examiner Charities, Inc.	2,019.00
Wave Organ	Exploratorium	384.00
Aquatic Park	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	208.00
Baker Beach	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	452.00
Black Point	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	308.00
Bldg. 89, Alcatraz Island	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	1,832.00
Cellhouse 64, Alcatraz Is.	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	2,551.00
Crissy Field 4th of July	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	1,520.00
Fort Funston	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	136.00
Fort Mason	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	226.00
Lands End Switch Trail	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	443.00
Pier 4, Lower Ft. Mason	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	1,077.00
Tennessee Valley (BACCA)	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	484.00
Victorian Park	Golden Gate Nat. Rec. Area	144.00
Grace Child Develop. Center	Grace Child Develop. Center	864.00
Super Bowl 1985	HDO Productions	947.00
Holy Family Day Home	Holy Family Day Home	288.00
Huckleberry House	Huckleberry House	964.00
Infant Development Center	Infant Development Center	433.00
Jefferson Nursery	Jefferson Nursery	288.00
Nihomachi "Little Friends"	Little Friends Childcare Ctr.	864.00
Misrae Daycare Center	Misrae Daycare Center	816.00
Mariposa Gardens	Mission Housing Develop. Corp.	1,678.00
Alabama & 19th St.	Mission Language & Voc. School	72.00
Mission YMCA	Mission YMCA	1,151.00

Noriega Children's Center	Noriega Children's Center	48.00
Precita Center	Precita Center	586.00
Richmond Community Center	Richmond Community Center	478.00
S.F. Airport	S.F. Airport	1,152.00
Great Highway Dune Planting	S.F. Clean Water Department	911.00
S.F. City College	S.F. Community College District	1,675.00
Alemaný Housing Project	S.F. Housing Authority	2,303.00
Alice Griffith Garden Homes	S.F. Housing Authority	1,152.00
Bernal Dwellings Playground	S.F. Housing Authority	4,608.00
Hayes Valley Apartments	S.F. Housing Authority	3,159.00
North Beach Housing	S.F. Housing Authority	1,504.00
Ping Yuen Housing Project	S.F. Housing Authority	1,728.00
Sunnydale Housing Project	S.F. Housing Authority	3,456.00
Valencia Gardens Housing Project	S.F. Housing Authority	1,008.00
Arkansas Garden	S.F. League of Urban Gardeners	32.00
Bay View Community Garden	S.F. League of Urban Gardeners	576.00
Redding School	S.F. League of Urban Gardeners	80.00
S.F. Police Range	S.F. Police Department	252.00
Alta Plaza	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	144.00
Arboretum	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	210.00
Bernal Heights Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	4,568.00
Bulbs Planting	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	812.00
Conservatory	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	501.50
Fire Break Sites	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	483.50
Glen Canyon Park		
Glen Park Ropes Course	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	1,653.00
Holly Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	1,282.00
Lafayette Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	1,440.00
Marina Green	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	144.00
Martin Luther Dr.	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	232.00
McLaren Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	144.00
Mt. Davidson Delwood	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	2,810.00
Mt. Lake Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	864.00
Music Concourse G.G. Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	335.00
Ocean View Playground	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	2,304.00
Palace of Fine Arts	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	1,040.00
Potrero Hill Rec. Center	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	2,746.00
Sand Box Renovation	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	576.00
St. Mary's Park	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	426.00
Twin Peaks	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	648.00
Velmar Terrace	S.F. Rec. & Park Dept.	32.00
S.F. Senior Center (Maritime)	S.F. Senior Center	358.50
Commodore Stockton School	S.F. Unified School Dist.	737.00
George Washington High School	S.F. Unified School Dist.	312.00
Horace Mann School	S.F. Unified School Dist.	536.00
Spring Valley School	S.F. Unified School Dist.	1,728.00

Financial District Strut	S.F. Urban Fair	57.00
S.F. Urban Fair	S.F. Urban Fair	242.00
Cortland Clearing	San Francisco Water Dept.	216.00
Hyde & Bay	San Francisco Water Dept.	332.00
Swords into Plowshares	Swords into Plowshares	864.00
Theater Artaud	Theater Artaud	255.50
UOAC Ropes Course Ft. Miley	Urban Outdoor Adventure Ctr.	571.00
Women's Alcoholism Center	Women's Alcoholism Center	1,409.00
Wu Yee Childcare Center	Wu Yee Childcare Center	2,304.00
	(YMCA)	
	SUBTOTAL	96,802.00
Small projects not listed above		2,107.50
	TOTAL	98,909.50

solicitation of bids, negotiation with vendors, and the inevitable problems associated with delays in delivery. The SFCC has found that the mix of projects (state-funded, foundation-funded and contracts) has allowed for the flexibility in scheduling needed when materials fail to arrive or need reordering.

Productivity has been emphasized, particularly in the last half of 1985. The work plan for the year was based on an average daily crew size of nine. As of July, SFCC had fallen short of that expectation; the average was seven and a half. As a result, plans for completion of MOCD projects were behind schedule and posed both public relations and revenue problems since dollars are received on the basis of work hours billed. In order to compensate for this, a greater emphasis was put on attendance and several incentive programs were introduced to reward the crews with best attendance. Attendance has improved.

ASSESSMENT OF WORK QUALITY

The SFCC has demonstrated that a youth conservation corps can help meet urban conservation needs. Almost all SFCC work is on outdoor physical projects, representing two types of urban conservation: those for the Department of Parks and Recreation involve basic conservation activities in an urban park setting and include erosion control, reforestation, trail work and facilities development. Other projects represent more typically urban conservation work -- improving outdoor public spaces and recreational facilities and improving the quality of life, particularly in low-income areas.

Four sources can be used to assess the quality of work performed by the SFCC: observations by the P/PV research team, unsolicited recommendations from work sponsors, P/PV interviews with a sample of work sponsors, and evaluation forms completed by work sponsors at the request of the SFCC. These sources reveal that the quality of work performed by the SFCC is quite good and sometimes excellent.

Observations of the research team at worksites were that crews worked productively, were well supervised and produced high quality work.

Project sponsors have written many unsolicited letters of commendation, some of which have been distributed to board members as part of board reports. The SFCC'S reputation is demonstrated by the ease with which it develops additional work sponsors. The corps also get requests from employers for corpsmembers to do temporary, parttime or permanent work. (In the case of temporary or part-time requests, SFCC usually releases corpsmembers who want to earn more money. This is permitted even if it occurs on an education day.)

A sample of eight project sponsors was interviewed by a member of the research team. Six were extremely enthusiastic and the other two were generally pleased with the quality of SFCC work and the efficiency with which it was completed. Six asserted that, without the corps, the work would not have been done. The other two claimed that their own overworked staff would have had to complete the tasks themselves. All the sponsors said they did not have the resources to get the work accomplished through regular commercial channels.

The reviews were not exclusively "raves." Project Sponsors are asked by the SFCC to complete a Project Sponsor Evaluation Form when a project is completed. A reading of a sample of nine of these forms revealed somewhat more mixed evaluations. Four sponsors provided very satisfactory ratings, gave high marks to supervision and valued the work much higher than its cost. Three were somewhat satisfied, found the work less efficient or skillful than they had hoped, but would use the corps again. Two, however, were quite dissatisfied and had complaints about supervision, cooperation and management by the SFCC staff. This suggests that the SFCC should continue to be vigilant in its supervision and quality control, and should not become too complacent about its success in the work setting.

Productive work has and will continue to be a major feature of the SFCC. But in the last year, the scope and complexity of work planning has become a major endeavor. Increasingly, the SFCC is operating like a contractor. This requires time-consuming and complex management and forces staff to devote considerable time to project planning at the possible expense of directing and supporting youth and youth employability. Is the SFCC biting off more than it can chew? The research team noted that the quality of supervision and the dual emphasis on supervision and youth training must continue, and even be strengthened, if the focus on work is to succeed.

VI. YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A second major focus of the SFCC is youth development. This occurs both formally and informally through work and through the education component. This section describes the goals, history and design of the youth development component and an assessment of its activities.

GOALS OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN THE SFCC

Youth development as a goal and theme is pervasive. The written goals declare that the SFCC will:

- establish the youth as disciplined workers;
- provide a youth leadership development program;
- be responsive to the needs of San Francisco's youth; and
- provide constructive and relevant training and education programs.

Except for the mention of work, these statements do not provide a blueprint. They leave open many issues of utilization and organization. The decision to devote one day a week to education was made by the early planners (Weisberg et al.) and not by those who assumed corps leadership. The executive director and others from the CCC were accustomed to a five-day work week, with formal education activities conducted in the evening. Thus youth development through work has been strong from the beginning, but the formal educational component has evolved more slowly.

To date, the SFCC has organized a set of activities intended to achieve two goals, employability and leadership development.

Employability is pursued in a variety of ways:

- developing a work ethic that stresses punctuality, a sense of responsibility, responding to supervision and productivity;
- teaching specific work skills through the work experience and in some classes;
- attending to job-acquiring skills, including filling out applications and interviewing; and
- emphasizing communication and literacy.

Leadership development is less clear. Efforts to help create a "thinking worker" are expressed in activities designed to instill social values (registering to vote and giving blood), to improve multicultural understanding and to increase awareness of social and political issues.

These are implemented during the course of weekly community meetings and as part of the weekly education day.

YOUTH DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS

Employability and leadership/personal development are pursued in the following three ways: through the general rules and norms of behavior that apply to all corpsmembers, through the work activities, and as part of the time that is set aside for unpaid education.

The Rules and Norms of Behavior

These include a very strong emphasis on attendance, punctuality, following orders and appropriate dress (including not wearing sunglasses or hats during class or meetings); and prohibition of alcohol, drugs and weapons. These rules are intended not only to create a smoothly functioning and orderly program, but also to build the necessary behavior for getting and holding a job.

The Work Program

Employability is developed both indirectly and directly as a consequence of the work program. At the worksites, corpsmembers must follow instructions as well as abide by health and safety rules. During the course of work, corpsmembers learn a variety of job skills that are sometimes reinforced during workshops offered as part of the formal Friday classes. Skills learned include tool use and maintenance, carpentry, gardening and landscaping, masonry and bricklaying. These vary with the types of work projects on the schedule.

The key factor is not the teaching of occupational skills, but the development of corpsmembers' confidence and a capacity to learn. Pride and confidence go hand in hand with feelings of success when corpsmembers see the product of their labor in completed projects. Leadership and personal growth are also enhanced through the experience of teamwork and informal peer training as experienced corpsmembers assist new ones.

The best opportunities for leadership and personal development occur for those who earn the role of crew leader. Its benefits include the chance to assume responsibility as supervisors and as technicians and to develop self-confidence and self-esteem in the process. If the experience of the CCC holds true, some crew

leaders may go into staff positions in other conservation corps. The observation of the research team is that the benefits to these individuals may be among the most significant accomplishments of the SFCC.

Education Activities

One day of education each week is required but unpaid. If a corpsmember is absent from the education day without approval, he/she is not paid for the following Monday's workday. The day is devoted both to employability and to leadership/personal development through activities that include formal classes in traditional academic subjects (reading and math) and English as a Second Language, non-academic formal classes and informal activities. Together they comprise what is considered a holistic approach to education/youth development, including a focus on developing "thinking workers," in the following ways:

- Formal Classes in Academic Subjects

The SFCC is committed to the notion that employability and youth development are dependent upon a youth's ability to attain basic skills and literacy in English. If corpsmembers are not high school graduates, further education is required.

Corpsmembers are tested early in their enrollment for proficiency in basic skills and English. Typical enrollees have not been "school successful"; placing them in traditional classes in traditional settings does not always prove productive.

The SFCC started its formal academic program by using local community colleges or high schools to provide basic skills, GED preparation, reading, math and ESL classes. But, according to SFCC staff, that did not meet the corpsmembers' special needs. Therefore, the SFCC began implementing some components of a basic skills curriculum within its own educational program in the summer of 1985, when it adopted the math curriculum that had been developed at the East Bay Conservation Corps. In the fall of 1985, the SFCC also began contracting with community college teachers for GED prep and ESL classes at Fort Mason, and providing these classes after work twice a week from 4:15 to 6:30 p.m.

These classes are mandatory for all corpsmembers who test below the 10th grade level (about one-half of the corpsmembers) and are taught by a reading specialist. Corpsmembers are assigned to classes either

Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday. Those who participate earn credits toward a high school diploma. If they miss more than three unexcused classes they may be terminated from the SFCC.

Corpsmembers are also expected to participate in the SFCC Education Program (non-academic) on Friday mornings from 7:30 to noon. But Friday afternoons are now optional for those corpsmembers who are assigned to classes during the week.

ESL classes are held from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Fridays. Students are assigned by the education coordinator if their English proficiency is low. Enrollment has been increasing with growth in the number of corpsmembers who are relatively recent arrivals from Latin American and Asian countries.

- Classes in Non-Academic Subjects

Non-academic classes have been held since the beginning of the program, although their content and structure has varied over time. They deal with general skills (including tool maintenance and use) as well as more specific technical skills. They also include survival skills -- useful both on the job and in general life situations -- such as banking, health and nutrition, and birth control information. Sometimes, special areas such as the criminal justice system or poetry are explored. Some may be courses running several weeks; some are one day workshops. Typically, the classes are held at Fort Mason and are led by staff members of the SFCC, including work supervisors and core staff coordinators.

A core curriculum is provided for "newbies." This includes tool orientation, first aid and CPR, money management and budgeting, birth control and nutrition. Technical work skills, other survival skills and career development/pre-employment skills are also taught, but there is as yet no formalized curriculum for these skills.

Plans are underway to add a more developed Job Search/Career Development component on Friday afternoons for those corpsmembers who have high school diplomas. The SFCC is also considering more extensive vocational classes in plumbing, carpentry and power tool use.

In addition to academic and non-academic classes, the following three kinds of informal youth development activities are fostered during the course of the regular work week or on Fridays.

- A Focus On Writing

Corpsmembers are given notebooks on orientation day; each is encouraged to write in his/her "journal" every day. This is a strategy used to encourage clarity of thinking and written communication, both important employability and youth development goals. Journals are periodically collected and read by the education coordinator or work supervisor, but are not graded. Reading them is an opportunity for staff to learn more about the corpsmembers, their feelings about the program and their writing skills. It is also an enforcement mechanism and demonstrates that the instruction to write is serious.

- Weekly Community Meetings

During these meetings, information is shared and oral communication is encouraged. Each week, a representative of each crew must describe the crew's activities and what he/she is learning from the experience. All "newbies" introduce themselves to the larger group and tell a little bit about themselves.

It is during these meetings that voter registration and blood drives occur and discussion of current issues is fostered. A continuing topic in 1985 has been the situation in South Africa.

- Off-site Special Activities

These include periodic ball games, often in competition with neighboring conservation corps in the Bay Area. Other activities include backpacking and other field trips designed to broaden the horizons and experiences of inner city youth.

AN ASSESSMENT OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

Although work is a primary orientation, youth development activities are a key feature of the SFCC. (According to program staff, youth development activities are designed to create "thinking employable workers.")

The SFCC is most successful in the more informal aspects of youth development -- those promoted through the general spirit and ethos of the corps, through the work program and its supervision, through the focus on communication and self expression, and the sense of esprit and support that are provided to the youth. These aspects are implemented with ease, almost effortlessly, perhaps because they reflect the staff's deep convictions. The

most successful features of SFCC youth development activities resemble an alternative school model. The executive director had earlier in his career directed an alternative school.

The more formal aspects of the educational program suffer by comparison, floundering amid trial and error. Planning the educational program is complicated by the corps' rolling admissions and the wide variety of participants' backgrounds and achievements. This variation has been noted and improvements have been made through recent changes in the formal education program and the newbies course. But there is as yet no individualized, comprehensive plan that delineates each corpsmember's needs and a course of action. Although tests are conducted to place corpsmembers in appropriate basic skills classes, there is no plan to achieve overall competencies (life survival, pre-employment, etc.) that are the corps' goals. Nor is there a related plan to identify the point at which a corpsmember should be encouraged and/or assisted to leave the SFCC for other jobs or schooling or, conversely, to provide incentives (other than the new graduated wage plan) to remain with the corps for the full year.

The educational program does not seem to have received full-time attention by an education coordinator. Only recently has the program begun to reflect elements of a rational plan, but it is too soon to evaluate its effectiveness. Heavy reliance on regular SFCC staff has both minuses and plusses. On the one hand, it places an additional burden on work supervisors, whose role has already been expanded because of the requirements of CDBG work projects. On the other hand, the use of core staff and work supervisors in the education program appears to have strengthened the relationship between staff and corpsmembers and enlarged the support system that is available to youth. Arriving at an appropriate and equitable mix of insiders and outsiders as instructors in the formal education program has been an ongoing problem.

More focus by SFCC leadership is needed to define expectations and goals for the formal aspects of youth development and to set clear priorities. A year and half after the year-round program had begun, the best way a senior coordinator was able to articulate the goals of the education program was "that corpsmembers may learn that they can learn." This is noble but vague; after two years of a program in which about half the participants are high school dropouts, only two have completed GED through the channels provided by the SFCC.

One may speculate that not paying corpsmembers for education time reduces the seriousness with which the project addresses educational needs. The SFCC views itself as a work program, and that is where its energies are expended.

Further, it emphasizes a day's work for a day's pay. If corpsmembers are late without calling in, they cannot work that day

and do not get paid. If they do not put in the full number of work hours, it is reflected on the timesheets and their pay is reduced accordingly. If corpsmembers do not attend classes, technically they cannot work the following Monday. But excused absences are allowed and are easily given. Corpsmembers may also be excused if they are out on a special outside paid work assignment.

The model of four days of paid work and one day of unpaid education seems to have been accepted with very little deliberation. The SFCC may want to reexamine this, and consider whether this factor has indeed contributed to a devaluation of educational time. One possibility may be to consider paying for the education day, or adding a fifth working day and holding classes only in the evening. Both staff and corpsmembers may find that the time is used more productively under these conditions. In any event, the SFCC needs to put new energy and focus on its formal educational component.

VII. FUNDING AND COSTS

This section will describe the SFCC's funds and expenditures through 1985, as well as projected funding for 1986. It describes the various funding sources, as well as some issues that arise because of the mix of funds that the SFCC has received. Overall program costs, cost-per-corpsmember and cost-per-slot are also reviewed.

Level and Sources of Funds

From April 1983 through April 1984, the SFCC operated as part of the Private Industry Council (PIC) of San Francisco. Administrative costs for the summer pilot program, run during 1983, were absorbed by the PIC; corpsmember wages were paid with JTPA summer youth employment program dollars. Between April and September 1983, \$75,000 was raised and spent for planning and to operate the demonstration program. In September, the SFCC received a grant of \$580,000 from the Mayor's Office of Community Development to begin operation of a year-round program. These funds supported the corps until May 1, 1984, when the corps began operation as an independent non-profit agency.

Funds received once the corps was an independent operation are displayed in Table 13. The table shows funding levels for fiscal 1984 (the eight months from May through December), 1985, and projected funding for 1986.

Table 14 describes the specific funds received during 1985, exclusive of money carried forward from 1984. In 1985, the SFCC received the majority of its funding from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds -- 55 percent of the funds supporting the year-round program came from CDBG, as did 33 percent of the summer corps funds. The corps also received funds from a variety of other sources. These included federal, state and local dollars; restricted and unrestricted monies; funds tied to specific contract performance or number of people served; and general support. Eighty percent of the money supporting the year-round program in 1985 came from government sources directly, 20 percent came from non-government sources -- either from community-based organizations paying for services or in direct grants or donations from businesses and foundations. These grants and donations came from 12 different grantees, and ranged in size from as much as \$98,000 (from The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation) to as little as a few hundred dollars.

The SFCC receives very little money for general support. It generates funds through reimbursements of work contracts, or is the recipient of performance-based funds from the CCC. Thus,

Table 13

SFCC Funding Level

<u>Funding Levels:</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Year-Round</u>	<u>Summer</u>
FY 1984	766,261*	616,173	150,088
FY 1985	1,483,014	1,374,001	109,013
Projected FY 1986	1,643,026	1,533,026	110,000

*Although \$766,261 in income was raised in 1984, at the end of the year there was a balance of \$198,702 which was carried over to 1985. According to the corps, these were largely unrestricted donations that the corps had intended to use for start-up expenses.

Table 14

Sources of Funds - 1985

<u>Sources</u>	<u>How Earned</u>	<u>Year-Round</u>	<u>Summer</u>
CDBG			
Public services funds	General support	\$ 61,942 (5%)	\$ --
Public space improvement funds	Reimbursed for projects completed	752,000 (55%)	35,925 (33%)
Total		813,942 (60%)	35,925 (33%)
Cost-reimbursement contracts	Reimbursed for projects completed	61,010 (4%)	
GGNRA	Reimbursed for projects		71,476 (66%)
CCC	Paid per corpsmember served, based on actual expenditures	270,008 (20%)	
Foundation/ Corporate Support	Restricted or unrestricted grants	223,223 (16%)	1,612 (1%)
Interest		5,818 (- %)	
TOTAL, exclusive of carry-over from 1984		\$1,374,001	\$109,013

nearly all of the SFCC's funds (79%) are earned in one way or another. Fifty-nine percent of 1985 funds were earned for completing specific projects; most of these required that the corps develop projects, estimate costs, order materials and supplies, and do the work in order to be paid. Twenty percent of the SFCC's money was earned from the CCC, which reimburses local corps for serving corpsmembers who meet certain criteria. In both instances, the SFCC received the funds based on performance after the work or service had been delivered.

As was noted earlier, in 1985 the SFCC also had a substantial amount available that was unspent in 1984. The corps treats these funds as a cash reserve to finance materials and payroll for projects whose expenses are not reimbursed until the project is completed; this maintains a positive cash flow for the corps. The corps' 1985 financial statement indicates that about the same amount of money is being forwarded from 1985 to 1986. According to the SFCC, this carry-over is really the money that was carried into 1985, and replenished as reimbursements were received.

In addition to the funding sources noted above, in-kind contributions have also helped support the SFCC. The biggest in-kind contribution is the headquarters space at Fort Mason, donated by the National Park Service and valued at approximately \$30,000 a year. The SFCC has also received free billboard space (value unknown), a loaned executive for one year, pro-bono legal and accounting help, various donations of books, clothes and equipment, and miscellaneous items such as free pizza for the crew with the best attendance.

Many of the education costs are also absorbed outside of the SFCC budget. Teachers from the city's community college provide basic skills and English-as-a-Second-Language instruction at the SFCC headquarters; these classes are paid for by the community college system.

Funding for the Summer Program. In 1984, the summer program was funded by a CDBG Public Space Improvement grant given expressly for this purpose. In 1985, the summer program was partially funded by a \$71,476 contract with the National Park Service (Golden Gate National Recreation Area) and partially by funds from the 1985 CDBG Public Space Improvement grant that also funded the year-round program. Because summer expenses were not tracked separately in the CDBG grant, it is very difficult to identify the exact costs of the 1985 summer program.

However, according to Nancy Peterson, SFCC consultant, the summer corps cost approximately \$109,013, of which \$71,476 was from GGNRA, \$35,925 from CDBG, and \$1,612 from unrestricted donations. Note that costs in 1985 were substantially lower than in 1984 although about the same number of corpsmembers (34 in 1984 and 40 in 1985) were served. This is in part because 1984 was a start-

up year, so that planning and other initial costs were absorbed in the summer corps' budget. In addition, in 1985, much of planning and overhead of the summer program was subsumed by the year-round program.

Consequences of the Multiple-Funding Base

One of the main advantages of the design and implementation of the SFCC as an independent non-profit corporation is that it can receive funding from a variety of sources. Thus, in its short history, the SFCC has been able to muster funding from federal funds (CDBG) that are administered by the Mayor's Office of Community Development (MOCD), state funds administered by the California Conservation Corps (CCC), direct federal short term contracts (National Park Service, GGNRA), and foundation or corporate grants.

Multiple funding sources provide flexibility in programming. They also help provide short-term security and increased potential for program survival. However, each funding source has its own bureaucratic and/or reporting requirements. For example, the MOCD requires that the SFCC plan and purchase project materials as well as complete the labor; the CCC requires documentation of the neighborhoods from which corpsmembers come. These requirements increase administrative costs and staff administrative tasks in a project that allocates relatively little money to data management and record keeping. (Budget is presented later in this chapter.)

At present, the two major sources of funds, CDBG and CCC contracts, are vastly different in ways that have consequences for program operations and management. The CDBG contract is work-based and commits the SFCC to perform public-space improvement work on approximately 30 specified and pre-budgeted projects. It is based on an average of five crews working on CDBG projects at any given time during 1985. The range of work allowed by CDBG projects is narrow. Work must be performed outdoors on public lands or facilities that serve low and moderate-income San Francisco residents. Projects must meet strict eligibility criteria, established by the Mayor's Office of Community Development and the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, which oversees the CDBG program.

Because of the magnitude of the CDBG grant -- \$1,000,000 (of which over 40 percent is for project materials, professional design services and other direct project costs), the SFCC has elected to operate much like a private contractor. CDBG projects require extensive staff planning of individual work projects, ordering of materials and dealing with vendors and related problems. They also require long-range planning and negotiation of work projects up to one and one-half years in advance in order to negotiate and plan the scope of work for the annual MOCD (CDBG) contract.

On the other hand, the CCC agreement is a services contract that requires the SFCC to provide employment, education and job skills training to a specific number of youth, over and above the number of youth served with non-CCC funding. Whereas the focus of CDBG is efficient completion of projects, the focus of the CCC contract is employment development for an increasing number of young adults. Fewer restrictions are placed on work projects; the primary requirement is that the projects serve the public good. Consequently, a broader range of projects and project sponsors can be worked with by using CCC funds to supplement those from the CDBG.

In 1985, the SFCC program was structured so that an average of five crews were working on MOCD projects and an average of two crews were working on CCC supported projects at any one time. CCC funds have allowed flexibility in assigning crews. When problems on certain CDBG funded projects arose (e.g., materials not arriving on schedule) the SFCC has been able to transfer corpsmembers to short projects funded by either the CCC or a foundation rather than send crews home. This flexibility has been critical to the stability of operations.

However, at times the various funding requirements come into conflict. For example, CDBG and other reimbursement contracts require that the corps complete projects in order to be paid. This, in turn, requires that crew production be maintained and acts against keeping corpsmembers who impede production. At the same time, CCC funds are based on the number of people served. These funds are an incentive to maintain marginal workers. The corps thus finds itself with both incentives and disincentives to fire or retain corpsmembers.

Cash Flow

The corps receives nearly all of its funding based on performance, either through contract reimbursement or service to corpsmembers. For example:

- Under the CDBG Public Space grant, the SFCC bills the Mayor's Office of Community Development for labor, materials and professional services as work is completed (twice monthly). In 1985, the actual CDBG grant was \$1 million; however, only \$788,328 was actually spent and \$78,810 deferred to 1986 due to the difficulty in getting many of the projects going, the strict eligibility criteria for projects, and the time needed to complete paper work required at all project stages.
- The State of California (CCC) funding is based upon the number of corpsmembers served under the conditions of the contract. The SFCC must maintain a specified corpsmember

level and bill the CCC on a monthly basis for costs associated with these corpsmembers.

- A cooperative agreement with the National Park Service (GGNRA) was developed to allow reimbursement for project work on Park Service lands when funding is available. In 1985, reimbursement was received for work performed in a summer program.
- Several short term contracts were developed and implemented in 1985; these include work with the San Francisco Airport, Water Department, and on several special events. Some were based upon corpsmember hours; others on overall project costs. The SFCC anticipates considerable development of fees-for-services contracts over the next year.

For all these contracts, the SFCC must pay the operating expenses of the corps -- primarily staff and corpsmember wages -- before being paid by the sponsoring agency. In addition, for many projects, the SFCC pays for materials, equipment rental and design services up front, and is reimbursed later.

Other corps attempting to support themselves with this level of reimbursement have found serious cash flow problems. The SFCC has so far avoided this problem by creating a cash reserve fund from unrestricted corporate and foundation grants. However, project staff are concerned about the situation in future years because of the uncertain availability of these kinds of funds.

Program Expenditures

Program expenditures for the 1985 year and projected expenditures for 1986 are found in Table 15. Costs are projected to be higher in 1986 than 1985 primarily because the corps plans to add an eighth crew midway through the year, and because periodic corpsmember raises have been instituted. For both years, the largest single cost item is corpsmember wages. Corpsmembers begin at the minimum wage, \$3.35 an hour. They are paid for 32 hours a week of work time; they are not paid if they do not work, or for mandatory education time. Youth do not receive unemployment insurance or other benefits; however, sick leave provisions are being added in 1986. Payroll taxes include social security (FICA) and Workman's Compensation. Corpsmembers who demonstrate motivation and leadership have a limited number of opportunities to increase their pay -- crew leader and specialist wages begin at \$4.20 and \$5.00 an hour. A recently implemented plan allows for increases based both on performance and length of time in the program.

The second largest cost is personnel, both administrative personnel and work project staff. Social Security (FICA), Workman's Compensation, and state unemployment insurance are paid as payroll taxes. All staff receive a health insurance package.

Table 15

Program Expenditures

<u>Expenditure</u>	1985 ANNUAL*		1986 PROJECTED**	
	<u>Amount</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
Staff salaries and benefits	\$367,127	(25%)	\$449,225	(28%)
Corpsmember wages and payroll taxes	438,417	(30%)	450,509	(28%)
Transportation	38,908	(2%)	35,578	(2%)
Work program equipment and supplies	27,719	(2%)	23,820	(2%)
Insurance	33,688	(2%)	38,100	(2%)
General operating expenses	95,449	(7%)	95,892	(6%)
Capitol equipment	11,144	(1%)	1,200	(-%)
Uniforms, later reimbursed	28,717	(2%)	17,256	(1%)
Direct work project expenditures	322,089	(22%)	402,968	(25%)
Summer program	<u>109,013</u>	(7%)	<u>110,000</u>	(6%)
Total Expenditures	\$1,472,271	(100%)	\$1,624,598	(100%)

* Based on unaudited financial statement for year ending 12/31/85

** Based on 1986 projected budget, date 2/9/86.

The third largest expenditure is for direct work project expenses, which the SFCC must plan and pay for on the CDBG projects, but for which they are reimbursed. These include project supplies (play structures, lumber, planting supplies, etc.) professional design services and other special project expenses (i.e. leased equipment).

Note that there are two areas in which relatively little money is spent: data management and record keeping, and staff training. Plans for 1986 do include more time, and hence, more money to be devoted to staff training.

Corpsmember Slots/Corpsmember Costs

The SFCC work program and funding base is designed around a specific number of crews ranging in size from eight to 12 corpsmembers with an average of 10 enrolled at any give time. During the start-up period for the year-round program, the SFCC worked with three crews for the first four months; in May it grew to five crews for four months, and six crews for the remaining three months. The average daily strength for the entire year was 50. Seven crews operated in the year-round program in 1985, with a daily average of 73 corpsmembers.

Cost per corpsmember slot in 1985 was \$13,869 for the year-round program and \$2,535 for the summer corps. The year-round cost-per-slot is calculated as total year-round expenses (\$1,472,271 minus \$109,013 or \$1,363,258) less the following items: uniform costs reimbursed by corpsmembers (\$28,717) and material and equipment reimbursed by work sponsors (\$322,089). Other materials and equipment retained by the program are kept in the total. The new total, \$1,012,452, is divided by the average daily corpsmember strength of 73 to reach the cost-per-slot reported above. The cost per summer corps slot is reached by dividing the total cost of the summer corps (\$109,013) by 43, the approximate average daily strength. Cost per participant for the year-round program in 1985 was \$2,531 (total year-round costs of \$1,012,452 divided by 400, the total corpsmembers enrolled in 1985). This cost is low because so many corpsmembers entered and left the corps in 1985.

One would expect a year-round slot to cost approximately six times what a slot in a two-month summer program costs -- and this is approximately the ratio between the costs-per-slot for the SFCC year-round and summer programs. Other differences in costs-per-slot between the year-round and summer programs reflect the fact that many of the summer corps' expenses -- for planning, uniforms, equipment, etc. -- are absorbed by the year-round corps. Some are based on real differences in the complexity of work projects. Another difference probably comes from the fact that the summer corps has very little turnover (44 of the 61 people enrolled stayed at least seven of the eight weeks) so that recruiting, replacement and training costs per slot are probably lower.

To put the SFCC cost-per-slot into perspective, the CCC's cost-per-slot for non-residential centers is \$16,846 including central staff and the training academy, and \$12,964 when these costs are excluded. Since San Francisco's costs include central administrative functions, although not a training academy, it seems reasonable that the SFCC's costs would fall between the two for the CCC. The corps in Marin (MCC), East Bay (EBCC) and New York City (CVC) are much like the SFCC in that they are urban, non-residential corps not targeted to a disadvantaged population, although serving substantial numbers of such youth. CVC's cost-per-slot for its start-up year is between \$16,767 and \$19,550 depending on what assumptions are made about how much the corps will be paying to corpsmembers from a scholarship/cash incentive program. In an earlier case study on the Marin Conservation Corps, P/PV estimated MCC's cost-per-slot for 1985 at \$20,123 and EBCC's cost-per-slot as \$16,875. MCC's costs-per-slot are based on a period when the corps was experiencing a fiscal crisis, and include costs of materials that are reimbursed by work sponsors. Thus, they are likely higher than the 1986 cost-per-slot.

These figures are presented to help compare SFCC's costs to those of basically similar youth conservation corps programs. These figures are not presented as an assessment of cost-effectiveness. Such an analysis would require a detailed study of program outcomes, and attention to differences in the kinds of youth who participate, types of work projects and the services offered to youth.

The cost-per-slot figures are high for each of the programs noted. Youth conservation corps programs generally show a higher cost-per-slot than traditional youth employment programs because youth corps programs provide quality adult work supervision, pay enrollees' wages and provide participants with supplementary services. A rough comparison of cost-per-slot figures of youth conservation corps programs with those of less intensive programs also ignores the immediate and long-term benefits youth corps provide for youth.

VIII. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This report has described the history, goals, operations and characteristics of the San Francisco Conservation Corps, the first urban, locally-supported youth conservation corps in the nation. The SFCC is a non-residential, highly centralized conservation corps. It is a production-oriented program that emphasizes both work and youth development, and primarily serves disadvantaged youth who represent the multi-cultural/multi-ethnic population of San Francisco.

The purpose of this interim report is to describe the corps as it moved from start-up to a more mature stage of operation. On the basis of the research team's observations, certain conclusions can be made about how the corps operates, who it attracts and retains, the extent to which it is achieving its goals and objectives, and what lessons other corps might learn from the SFCC experience. A summary of these findings, conclusions and lessons learned are presented in the remainder of this chapter.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Basic Program Features

After two years of operation as a year-round program, the SFCC displays many features common to other corps -- particularly the California Conservation Corps (CCC). These include:

- a policy of accepting youth regardless of economic background;
- an emphasis on productive physical work that serves public needs;
- an emphasis on teaching employability skills through this work;
- an attempt to develop in youth such other attributes as self esteem, literacy and social responsibility; and
- an emphasis on esprit de corps.

The SFCC is distinguished from many other corps in the following ways:

- The program operates exclusively in a non-residential and urban setting;
- It earns more than half of its funds through contract reimbursement or performance based contracts rather than relying on general support funds; and

- The conviction that corpsmembers learn how to work hard by doing hard work is reinforced by very strict standards of attendance and behavior. While other corps have similar rules, the SFCC enforces them more consistently and, as a result, turnover is higher than in many other corps.

Enrollment

On a given day, between 65 and 85 corpsmembers are active in the SFCC. The corps, like several others, is not solely targeted to the economically disadvantaged, and has a strong commitment to represent the diverse populations of San Francisco. It enrolls youth from each of the major ethnic or cultural groups in the city, including blacks, whites, Hispanics and Asians. One-third of the enrollees are women (the same proportion of women enrolled in non-residential CCC centers). About half of the corpsmembers have been graduated from high school; half have not. The corps attracts mostly single people, people without children, and those who are not the primary wage earners in their families. Four of five corpsmembers are at risk in the labor market, based on not completing high school, having received AFDC or food stamps or being unemployed for at least six months before they joined the SFCC, or some combination of these.

Funding

The corps is an independent, non-profit agency. As such, the SFCC has been able to receive funds from a variety of sources. Because of the efforts of staff and program supporters, the corps has been awarded or has earned a substantial amount of money. These have included federal and state dollars as well as private funds.

More than half of the corps' money in 1985 came from reimbursements for specific contracts, although the corps also receives funds from the CCC for serving corpsmembers and from various sources for general support. In 1985, the corps received a total of \$1,483,014 and spent \$1,472,471 to support a year-round program as well as an eight-week summer corps. The cost-per-slot for the year-round program was \$13,869; cost-per-slot for the summer corps was \$2,535. These per-slot costs are within the range of expenditures by other similar corps.

Work

Since it started in April, 1983, the SFCC has grown from a single crew to seven work crews of eight to 12 corpsmembers. The work they do is the kind typically associated with conservation corps: outdoor, physical work requiring close supervision and, for the most part, unskilled labor. Examples include improvements to community structures and parks, landscaping, removal of fire

hazards, and erecting play structures. In 1985, the SFCC set ambitious goals for the completion of work, based on an average daily crew size of 10. Enrollment and attendance were lower than anticipated, so not all of the 30 or so planned work projects were completed. Despite the shortfall, the corps completed a great deal of work during 1985; it received more than \$800,000 in reimbursement for some of that work.

Youth Development

Youth development is fostered through work, the standards of behavior set by the corps, and both formal and informal educational programs. Corpsmembers work four of five days, for which they are paid, and are required to attend a fifth unpaid education day. They also are required to prepare presentations and speak in front of staff and other corpsmembers, to write in journals and to participate in community events. Observations and interviews with work sponsors suggest that corpsmembers who are retained demonstrate good work habits.

Staff report, and the research team observed, that corpsmembers mature and change as they move through the program. It is too early in the experience of the corps to determine objectively whether corpsmembers do, in fact, learn how to obtain and hold jobs, how their values and behavior are affected, and whether any changes remain once corpsmembers leave the program.

Partly because they do not stay in the corps for very long, only a few corpsmembers have achieved formal educational milestones while in the corps. In the first two years, two corpsmembers obtained a GED and one earned a high school diploma while they were in the corps.

Institutionalization

Despite problems, the SFCC had a strong start-up and appears to have moved towards maturity as an institution. For example:

- It is now in its third cycle of funding from the city's MOCD funds. The \$1,000,000 contract for 1986 was approved unanimously.
- Many work sponsors now call the SFCC to request work crews. Project development has become easier and more routine, and staff can more deliberately choose new areas of work.
- The program continues to attract enrollees in substantial numbers. Recruitment is more reactive than proactive; youth hear about the SFCC from others or see crews working, and increasingly take the initiative to request jobs.

- According to staff and board members, there is decreasing concern that the survival of the corps is dependent on the interest of the current mayor, board members or staff.

CONCLUSIONS

This section of the report presents P/PV's assessment of the extent to which the SFCC was meeting its goals and objectives during the time covered by the report; specific areas of strength and areas where the corps could consider changes; and some recommendations.

Conclusions are presented about each of the following: the SFCC as an organization, work, youth development, corpsmember strength (including diversity among corpsmembers, targeting and attrition) and the institutionalization of the corps.

Organization, Staffing and Structure

- The corps has benefited from being an independent non-profit agency. It has been able to obtain strong community support and funding from many sources. Although an administrative burden, the mix of funding has afforded the program independence, a greater likelihood of financial security and flexibility in program design.
- The staff views the small size of the program as another key strength, although there has been pressure from the board and others to expand. The corps started small and grew gradually to a stage where it is large enough to be diverse, but small enough to preserve a level of intimacy and program control. The manageable size has contributed to the corps' ability to move smoothly and quickly from start-up to maturity. The challenge presented by further expansion will be to realize economies of scale while maintaining the ethos of the corps.
- The SFCC has assembled a strong staff, many of whom are very experienced with conservation corps or similar work/youth development programs. The corps has a committed and forceful leader, hard working senior staff and experienced work supervisors. There has been very little staff turnover; the original director of the corps has been retained as a consultant. The maturity, experience and continuity of the staff have helped move the SFCC quickly and without crises to a steady state of operation.

- The strength of the staff is augmented by the centralized structure of the program. Senior staff are in daily contact with staff who supervise the work. All staff are in daily contact with corpsmembers, who begin and end each day at the corps' center. The ethos and standards of the corps are constantly reinforced by staff, by the daily schedule and visibly throughout the corps' headquarters. Corpsmembers' identification with the corps appears to be strong.

Work

- The focus on productive work remains a primary strength of the SFCC. Crews are well supervised and do work of good quality, according to observations and interviews with sponsoring agencies. However, in 1985 the corps had difficulty meeting all of its work commitments, in part because fewer corpsmembers attended each day than anticipated, and in part because production plans may have been unrealistic. The corps has taken steps to increase enrollment and attendance. These steps appear to be having some success.
- The corps has so far concentrated on doing physical work typical of other conservation corps. It has not done human service projects, because the staff felt it was important to do what it knew best. This seems to have been a sensible decision during start-up. However, the corps now is planning to experiment with other kinds of work. Human service projects would increase the amount of work available to the corps, broaden its base of work sponsors, and provide different kinds of experiences and skills for corpsmembers.

Youth Development

- The corps seeks to develop youth into more active, responsible and employable citizens of San Francisco. These goals are sought primarily through work, but also through structure, rules and discipline; through formal educational programs; and through other kinds of activities to foster thought and expression. These other three elements have been unevenly implemented.
- The corps structure, rules and discipline are firm. The rules are strict and the discipline strong. This is deliberate -- it sets a tone and a set of expectations that corpsmembers must meet and allows the corps to function more like a private employer than a training program.

The corps can, and often does, fire those who do not meet its standards. This in itself is an important training tool. At the same time, however, the strict application of the rules can be a problem. According to staff, some youth who could benefit from the corps have been unable to survive the first week. All of the corpsmembers use public transportation, many come from long distances, a few have children for whom they must coordinate daycare each day. One may question whether the rules on lateness, especially during the first week, have the effect of making it harder for certain people (e.g., those with young children, or who live furthest away) to participate. Some evidence supports this idea; the corps enrolls very few people with family responsibilities.

- The formal aspects of youth development, in particular the portion of the week set aside for formal education, have not been as well planned or implemented as work, the structure and rules, or even the informal opportunities for youth to read, write and speak. Goals and objectives for formal education have been slow to evolve. Staff seem more comfortable with informal and non-traditional education than with formal programs leading to specific goals such as GEDs or literacy or math competencies.

It is unclear why a well developed educational program has been slow to evolve, whether it was deliberately given less priority than other aspects of the program or simply assumed less importance; but in any case, some time has probably been lost that could have been used to greater benefit. As this report was being prepared, educational programs at the SFCC were undergoing change. It will be important to see whether the corps can develop and carry out an educational program of the same quality as the work program in the long run.

Corpsmembers Strength

- The SFCC sought to enroll a diverse group of young people in its first two years. For the most part, it succeeded. In particular, the corps has been more successful than many in enrolling people from different cultural backgrounds. Even so, most corpsmembers are male, single and come from minority groups. The corps is continuing purposive recruiting of those segments of San Francisco -- women, non-black minorities and whites -- under-represented in the corps.

- Although the corps is untargeted, it attracts large numbers of poor or disadvantaged corpsmembers. From a policy perspective, the SFCC has demonstrated to its critics that it is possible for a program to remain open to all, yet to serve those in need.
- However, there are benefits to corps that enroll a broad spectrum of youth: youth from all economic backgrounds learn from each other, a broad political constituency is developed, and the stigma that can be attached to targeted programs is avoided. The SFCC is aware of these benefits, and is making efforts to continue to attract advantaged as well as disadvantaged youth.
- High turnover has serious implications for the SFCC. Although strict rules are necessary to ensure that youth learn to work and that a high level of production is maintained, the result of enforcing the rules has been a turnover that has strained the staff, caused difficulty in meeting production and funding goals, and interfered with the ability to deliver formal educational programs.

Institutionalization

- The SFCC showed a remarkable ability to capitalize on its strengths and work past its weaknesses in its first two years. The corps looks like an established corps -- its work, staff and administrative systems function as well as those of older corps. Where goals and procedures are less defined or seem less successful -- in the areas of youth development and corpsmember retention, for example -- the corps appears to be increasing its efforts.
- The SFCC has a good funding base and receives useful in-kind contributions. However, it has been slow to exploit its board and its external resources for assistance beyond funding. For example, the corps has only recently used its board to find jobs for corpsmembers once they leave the corps.

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SAN FRANCISCO EXPERIENCE

The San Francisco experience provides some lessons for other corps, particularly those interested in the feasibility of corps in urban settings. It should also be noted that the SFCC has been operating for several years and some of the lessons confirmed by this study have already found their way into the prevailing wisdom on youth corps.

Important lessons include the following:

- The conservation corps can be applied in an urban setting. There are many physical community improvement projects that urban corps can accomplish such as park improvements, playground construction, landscaping in public housing areas or for community organizations, interior renovation and remodeling and assistance at public events.
- Much of the residential corps model can be adapted to a non-residential program. Non-residential corps can keep corpsmembers busy through long days, can require that they start work very early in the morning and attend evening educational sessions, do community work on week-ends and so on. However, as is the case with residential programs, it may be difficult to attract women with children, or others with family responsibilities.
- With an experienced staff, a relatively gradual and small scale start, and commitments from funders and work sponsors, a corps can move from start-up to more mature functioning within a few years. This can be accomplished without chaos if the corps concentrates on what it knows how to do best.
- Non-targeted recruitment can and does attract substantial numbers of disadvantaged youth.
- Targeting recruitment to specific populations (e.g. Hispanics, Asians, females) can effectively produce heterogeneity. This is particularly so in an urban corps in which participants are largely attracted to the program by word of mouth and through friends. Making inroads in a particular community produces a snowball effect.
- A corps can adapt to the requirements of different types of funding sources, as for example those of CDBG public space funds. However, requirements involving the need to estimate project requirements in advance, and to plan for and order materials have implications for how staff use their time, for program administration and for budgeting.
- The application of strict rules to produce good work habits, while important, is likely to result in high attrition. Some people who could probably benefit from the corps may be lost. In addition, attrition must be compensated for by aggressive and ongoing recruitment in order to insure the necessary workforce to complete work obligations.

The SFCC is an exciting program. It has accomplished much and has much more that it can accomplish. We look forward to working with and learning more from the corps as it continues to progress.